Among Ideal Friends

A family theatre touring consortium developed by The Spark Arts for Children in partnership with Libraries in the East Midlands

Literature Review

Richard Fletcher

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Abbreviations used:

AIF   - Among Ideal Friends
BBB   - *A Boy and a Bear in a Boat,* Season 1, S1,
First   - *The First*, Season 2, S2,
BSLB   - *Big Sister, Little Brother,* Season 3, S3
WTRR - *Where the River Runs,* Season 4, S4,
SSWC - *Sylvia South and the Word Catcher,* Season 5, S5

ACE   - Arts Council England
CILIP   - Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
CIPFA - The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
CYP   - Children and Young People
DCMS - Department for Culture, Media and Sport
         (changed in July 2017 to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport)
DFE   - Department for Education
EEF   - Education Endowment Foundation
IMD   - Indices of Multiple Deprivation
LA   - Local Authority
LSOA - Lower Super Output Area
NFER - National Foundation for Educational Research
NGSL - New General Service List
NPO   - National Portfolio Organisation
NS-SEC - National Statistics Socio Economic Classification
SCL   - Society of Chief Librarians
TRA   - The Reading Agency

Introduction

The following documents were reviewed to provide a context for our original findings. The ambition is for this review to provide both academic and non-academic audiences an insight into the key lessons and policy discussion across the sectors involved.

AIF17-1 contains discussion under 5 main headings: Literacy and reading for pleasure, Arts education, Arts for children and young people, Cultural policy and Libraries.

Although the main themes are covered in AIF17-1, this report therefore covers each document individually in much greater detail, though the aim is to provide specialists and non-specialists a summarised version of each item with particular reference AIF and projects like it. Individuals from schools, libraries and the arts will hopefully find it equally useful.

Note that the bibliography for this document contains all sources referenced in AIF17-1 as well as the 42 specifically written up in this document.

General themes of the documents and their year of publication:

Theme	Count	Year published	Count
Libraries	15	1998	1
Cultural education	8	2004	2
Literacy	7	2009	1
Arts for children	4	2010	1
Education and inequality	4	2011	2
Cultural policy	3	2012	5
Out of school education	3	2013	4
Reading for pleasure	3	2014	7
Local government	1	2015	10
School libraries	1	2016	9
		2017	7
Total	49	Total	49

A number of other, more comprehensive literature reviews on more specific topics were covered and readers are recommended to consult these for a more thorough grounding in either the impact of arts education (Education Endowment Foundation, 2015) and reading for pleasure (The Reading Agency/BOP, 2015 or Department for Education, 2012)

1.

Two decades of Reading: an analysis of English policy affecting literacy 1997-2016

Gill, K / Read on, Get on, (2014)

This report covers the New Labour 1997-2010 and Coalition governments 2010-2015. Chapter one likely has the most relevancy to AIF, as it focuses on children aged 5-11, whereas two and three focus on ages 3-4 and 0-2 respectively. Under Thatcher and Major governments, per pupil funding, a National Curriculum and league tables were introduced; all broadly with the ambition to increase standards through increased accountability and increased competition between schools.

Over the New Labour period, the number of 11 year olds meeting their age-expectations in reading rose from 60% to 80%. The Literacy Hour, a key policy of the wider National Literacy Strategy has been examined and critiqued from many perspectives in too much detail to relate here. The author concludes the New Labour section, on the basis of several studies, while some of this increase is due to other educational improvements, grade inflation and wider socio-economic factors, the NLH and NLS had an 'impressive impact' though maybe not as dramatic as the headline results initially suggested. The impacts were not equally felt, particularly among poorer children and those with SEN. Actual enjoyment of reading likely decreased: "A positive trend in literacy skills has not been matched in attitudes, with studies finding that children's enjoyment of reading at age 9 and 11 declined between 1998 and 2003, even as their confidence increased and that the UK is behind other countries in pupils' enjoyment of reading."

Over the Coalition period, the percentage of pupils leaving school reading well had risen to 89% in 2015. Academisation and competition increased the difficulty in 'cascading' professional development among schools, with a thinned out 'middle tier' of government creating challenges in responding to regional 'cold spots' of educational achievement. Accountability pressure increased while investment in school support fell. Key stage expectations within the National Curriculum became more ambitious, though the intervening levels were removed, in order to "give schools genuine opportunities to take ownership of the curriculum." Record numbers of teachers leaving the profession and increased demand from a small scale

'baby boom' likely led to the rapid expansion of School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) though recruitment targets were missed in 4 of the 5 years of the parliament. The link between school leadership and the progress of all learners has been well established and has been shown to be of even greater importance in primary schools than secondary schools. Many heads are nearing retirement age and there is little capacity, or ambition among primary teachers, to replace them. The overall ambition was for innovation and progress to be led by schools rather than by the state, in a number of ways this has contributed to a 'Matthew effect' wherein those schools who are already performing well get better while poorer schools are left behind. Nevertheless, in headline terms, literacy continued to increase and benefits were also felt among disadvantaged and SEN children; likely associated with use of Pupil Premiums. The high priority given to certain targets may also have the unintended consequence of creating incentives to target 'low hanging fruit', to tip students just over the required level, rather than focus on longer term benefits and more securely retained skills.

There were no particular references to libraries or the arts in this chapter, though primary book clubs were briefly mentioned as beneficial. Reading for pleasure was identified by many sources as a key predictor of future attainment.

> *"A positive trend in literacy skills has not been matched in attitudes, with studies finding that children's enjoyment of reading at age 9 and 11 declined between 1998 and 2003, even as their confidence increased and that the UK is behind other countries in pupils' enjoyment of reading."*

@Crumblehulme, US library professional
A much quoted tweet from 2010.

2.

Raising the standard of work by, with and for children and young people: research and consultation to understand the principles of quality

Lord et al / NFER (2012)

Arts Council England commissioned this report to examine the principles that are considered important in creating "quality in arts and culture, by, with and for children and young people." Research and analysis of existing quality frameworks, a number of interviews and a quality seminar were carried out. The headline outcome can be seen in the identification of seven principles: Striving for excellence, Being authentic, Being exciting, inspiring and engaging, Ensuring a positive, child-centred experience, Actively involved children and young people, Providing a sense of personal progression, Developing a sense of ownership and belonging.

However, more critically, it is the proposed 'organising frame' and the 'underpinning principle' of planning, monitoring, review and reflection which seek to provide a flexible and rigorous approach to assessing the challenging notion of artistic quality or excellence. There is no particular hierarchy to the principles, allowing practitioners to prioritise according to their own context. The overlapping dimensions that encompass work created 'by, with and for' children and young people also account for the more practically variations of delivery. Importantly, this fundamentally moves the organising frame away from commonly debated 'old ground' topics of process vs product and away from core features of organisation (governance, safeguarding, equality and diversity). While these are necessary, they are not sufficient in themselves to ensure high quality against any one or several of the quality principles.

Section 3.2 (p8-15) discusses the quality principles, followed by organisational-level principles and a brief discussion of other approaches. Section 4 discusses the range of specific outcomes and impacts included by frameworks, broadly given as: Artistic skills, knowledge and understanding, Attitudes and values towards the arts, Activity, involvement and progression in the arts, Personal, social and communication skills, Health and well-being, Aspirations, career and life pathways. These outcomes are contrasted with the principles, in that while the principles can be broadly recognised across the sector, the precise type and measurement of outcomes is (understandably) less

standardized. The challenges of identifying a set of relevant outcomes, measuring them and having appropriate comparators to demonstrate against are all discussed as desirable yet challenging to deliver in practice. Those delivering participatory ie: 'with…' work were found to have a notably different set of values than those delivering 'for…' work. Unfortunately there was an increasing perception that almost all work seemed to need to be branded as participatory in some way to be valued by venues and funders.

The report does not aim to produce the final word on this difficult topic but makes useful progress towards a shared vocabulary around quality arts experiences for children and young people, whilst still allowing for a diverse range of organisations and activities to be included. Monitoring quality and self-improvement lay at the core of moving up the 'improvement spiral' though benchmarking, inspection criteria or other success indicators are also critical to meeting the needs and interests of others.

Schools and school-age children are frequently mentioned throughout, though most references relate to extra-curricular work or work outside of the classroom. The only reference to libraries is via the Museum, Libraries and Archives Outcomes Framework, which lives on somewhat as the Arts Councils' 'Inspiring Learning for all'

Automatic Library Membership Pilots Final Report'', Siddall, A / ACE (2014) and ''Children's Library Journeys: Libraries background research report

Crossley, L / ASCEL (2015)

Two reports are combined here, as the first pilot let to the development of the second.

In the first, 22 local authorities piloted universal library membership for children as a means of encouraging reading for enjoyment, using a range of methods. The technical and practical barriers to doing so were not thought to be insurmountable, however merely having a library card did not create active library members. Authorities broadly took one of three approaches: Offering library cards at birth through birth registration services, Promoting library membership to local children and families through schools and Offering combined library and leisure cards for children and young people. Though only a pilot, the report concluded that "to date, the most effective and consistent model for securing a nearly universal distribution are those using bulk transferred Local Education Authority to sign up all reception year children across a local authority." Importantly it was noted that cards in themselves had almost no impact on library use and should only be seen as the first step. All types of approaches were more effective when part of a wider programme of activity such as the Summer Reading Challenges.

The second report therefore aimed to gather suggestions on how engagement could be sustained through children's key life stages. This report contained its own literature review, some findings from which are reiterated below:

Skills development: Most learning of literacy happens in the first 11 years of a child's life, as does the development of a person's love of reading…Children who do not enjoy reading are ten times more likely to have fallen behind at school by age 11.

Literacy and poverty: The UK is the only economically developed country where 16-24 year olds have the lowest literacy skills of any age group in society…40% of the adult population in the UKs most deprived wards lack the literacy skills of an 11 year old.

Parental involvement: Studies have demonstrated parental involvement in children's literacy activities positively affect children's academic performance…The

most common reason given by 8-16 year olds for not using public libraries was that their family did not go to the library.

The role of libraries: 22% of children aged 4-11 said that visiting the library was more likely to make them read, compared to being given a new book (9.6%), getting a book from school (5.4%), watching a film or TV programme based on a book (3.1%) or reading a book on a tablet (1.8%).

In addition to desk research, ASCEL members were engaged via a questionnaire and seminar, the results of which all informed the construction of a national Children's Library Journeys offer based around the following key stages: Pre-natal to birth, Preschool, Transition to primary school, Transition to secondary school. Preschool was likely to be the phase in which automatic enrolment would have a significant impact although work with parents-to-be would also be vital to establishing "what the library can offer them throughout their childs life". Participants felt it would be appropriate to undertake a longitudinal study to gather detailed evidence on the long term impact of the offer. This has gone on to inform the National Children's Library Journeys Framework, in which specific interactions are detailed at each of the phases given above.

Arts award and arts activities were specifically mentioned as a method for interaction at Key Stage 2 and for out-of-school engagements at various ages, although school visits and author events were a more common choice.

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4.

Mapping the interrelationships of reading enjoyment, attitudes, behaviour and attainment: an exploratory investigation''

Clark & De Zoysa / National Literacy Trust (2011)

The report questions the commonly stated or assumed belief that enjoyment of reading, having more positive attitudes toward reading and simply reading more; are all equally related to reading attainment. The review of literature resulted in a complex and sometimes contradictory picture and a lack of empirical evidence. A number of papers are referenced regarding the relatively "high attainment but low satisfaction" effect seen in English pupils compared to other countries.

The original research carried out here, based on a survey of 4,503 young people, suggests that reading enjoyment is related both directly and independently (via behaviour) to reading attainment. With detailed statistical analysis, the final model proposed fit the data well and accounted for 41% of the total variance in attainment. (Figure 7, mediated semi-hierarchical model). Put simply, reading enjoyment has relationships with both reading attainment directly, and a strong relationship with reading behaviour; which then also impacts on attainment. Enjoyment and attitudes both impact on behaviour though only enjoyment and behaviour directly impact on attainment. The authors warn of the study's necessarily limited detail and the need for more longitudinal data.

This raises the dilemma of pursuing short term, attainment driven initiatives that may decrease overall enjoyment, compared to long term, enjoyment driven initiatives that may lower attainment standards. The model potentially also suggests that children who have not grown up in a literacy-rich environment may need a "significant event" (book gifting, an interesting book, an interesting conversation or a stimulating trip to the library) to "kick-start" their reading enjoyment and attitudes toward reading.

Arts, schools and libraries are not specifically referenced though the central topic clearly has a degree of relevance to all. It may be the case that similar models hold true for enjoyment of and attainment in other art forms.

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5.

Libraries and the geography of use: how does geography and asset ''attractiveness'' influence the local dimensions of cultural participation?

2016

Many studies have focused on traditional "push" factors to cultural participation, through individual and household level demographic and socio-economic characteristics. However, this paper (and other studies referenced within) also aim to reveal the significant effects of supply (or "pull" factors) and proximity to participation or attendance. Is location a more significant predictor of participation than social class?

The "attractiveness rating" of a library was established by quantifying internal and external factors. The internal factors related to the libraries opening hours and the number of drop-in user groups offered. The external factors related to the phenomenon of trip-chaining, drawn from transport planning. This describes the practice of visiting multiple destinations during a single trip between a (primary) origin and destination; therefore a library closer to other assets might be expected to be more attractive than an isolated library. The assets counted included shops, medical surgeries, post offices, cafes, supermarkets, bus routes, educational facilities, parks, playgrounds and others besides. 400 meters determined whether an asset was nearby or not. This is a commonly used distance to represent a 5 minute walk for someone with average mobility. The socio-economic characteristics of the library-attending and background populations were drawn from NS-SEC data.

The area examined covered 17 libraries in Gateshead, each providing a range of different services to broadly different communities. 6 of these libraries had also been run by volunteers since 2013. The membership database provided details for over 18,000 current members incorporating their home postcodes, the library at which they became a member and the last library they had used in the past 12 months.

In terms of "push" factors, participation at a library does not strongly correlate with any particular social class, nor are different social classes more or less likely to travel to libraries other than their local branch. The NSSEC profile of users closely reflects the local population. In terms of "pull" factors, the total "attractiveness rating" of a library was broadly linked to their total usage figures and also to the number of users travelling to a library other than the closest to them. Whether a library was co-located within a community 'hub' or not, did not appear to have a large impact. Whether a library was run by volunteers or not, also did not appear to have a large impact; although it was also the case that the three libraries with the lowest usage were all volunteer-run. The total number of hours open per week was the variable most closely correlated with total usage and the number of 'everyday spaces' within 400m (approximately 5 minutes walk)

In conclusion, geography and level of service are both useful explanatory factors for level of participation. The ability of users to 'trip chain' to other facilities such as shops, schools, banks and various others is an important aspect when users are assessing whether to use one venue or another.

Libraries are obviously an important focus for this paper, and educational establishments were one of the facilities measured in overall 'attractiveness' of a facility. Arts venues (theatres, cinemas) were also included but understandably less apparent in the everyday landscape.

6
The Literacy Hour

Machin & McNally, London School of Economics, (2004)

The reading and overall English attainment of children in National Literacy Programme were compared a set of control schools at the end of primary school education (age 11). Those who participated increased attainment in reading and English, and in particular, the programme seemed to have had a greater benefit to boys, who have typically underperformed compared to girls.

The background of the paper outlines the importance of literacy to economic development and briefly mentions other responses to the changing school resources (class size, teacher quality) For example, in the UK, the Moser report (DFE, 1999) identified one in five adults as not being functionally literate. The authors suggest that their approach in examining a change in content and delivery is novel, rather than only looking at net resources (class sizes, funding etc).

The National Literacy Programme (the forerunner of the National Literary Strategy) began the use of the Literacy Hour. This well-structured hour was implemented so as to address some of the criticisms of how English was taught in primary schools. For example, an OFSTED (Office for standards in Education) report about the teaching of reading in Inner London primary schools included criticism of the following practices: free reading with little or no intervention by the teacher; too much time spent hearing individual pupils read; insufficient attention to the systematic teaching of an effective programme of phonic knowledge and skills (OFSTED, 1996). It was thought that standards in the teaching of reading varied hugely from school to school, with many primary teachers not having had the opportunity to update their skills to take account of evidence about effective methods of teaching reading and how to apply them (Literacy Task Force, 1997).

The national programme cost approximately £25.52 per child per annum and produced a significant increase in reading scores. Reading scores at age 10 were found to be strongly related to future individual earnings by the age of 30. Using various controls to account for gender, region, family background and highest educational qualification (by age 30), it was possible to predict the earnings benefit that participation in the

programme would likely produce. Individuals who participated in the programme were predicted to earn between £75.40 and £196.32 more, per annum, than those who did not. It is impossible to take into account all variables and there may be costs and benefits not included in this calculation. Of particular note was any teachers input not accounted for in the costings, although some general feedback suggested that focusing on the NLP either replaced or reduced the amount of time that would have otherwise been spent on potentially less effective programmes. However, on further examination, the authors also state that, for example, Mathematics scores also likely saw some small positive impact related to the programme and this at least did not seem to indicate that resources were being drawn away from other areas.

Libraries and The Arts are not specifically mentioned in this paper.

7.

Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour?

Goodman & Gregg, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, (2010)

This report considers some of the ways that affluence and disadvantage influence children's educational attainment. The authors state that children growing up in poorer families emerge from school with lower levels of educational attainment and that this is a major contributing factor to patterns of social mobility and poverty. The report draws data together from numerous longitudinal studies (such as the Millenium Cohort Study) which typically involve up to 10,000 individuals with data collection at numerous stages over the course of years if not decades.

The report covers the following key sections, Early years, Primary School, Secondary School and Across childhood. For AIF, the first two sections are thought to be the most relevant. Additionally, a wide range of health, social and family factors are discussed, we will generally focus on the educational or literacy-related factors. Note the term SEP is used frequently. This refers to 'Socio-Economic Profile'; derived from household income, financial difficulties, mother and fathers occupation and housing tenure)

In the first section, Early Years (age 3-5) various social and educational variables are examined. The Home Learning Environment (HLE) measurements are drawn from the Millennium Cohort Study and include such questions as: "How often do you read to your child?", "How often do you take your child to the library?" at both ages 3 and 5. For example, 42% of children from poorer families were read to every day compared to 79% of children from the richest families. Importantly, on a closer 'decomposition' of the rich-poor gap, it emerged that the 'early childhood caring environment was the a key factor in explaining the cognitive gap between the poorest and richest children; accounting for one quarter of this gap. Within this, differences in the Home Learning Environment had the most impact. (See Figure 3.4, p24) The HLE was further described as a 'channel' through which socioeconomic status leads to lower cognitive outcome; as in, a lower socio-economic status leads to a poorer Home Learning Environment, which leads to lower cognitive scores. We might therefore assume that some of the other negatives associated with a lower socio-economic status can effectively be offset by a better Home Learning Environment; including visits to

the library, reading to children, learning songs, painting/drawing etc. Despite this, the authors still state that a large proportion of the overall gap is still unexplained by the numerous variables examined.

The second section, Primary school (5-11, and specifically 7-11), relates more to mothers and children's own aspirations, attitudes and behaviours related to their educational accomplishments. For instance, essentially none of the most affluent quintile hoped that their child would 'just get good GCSEs' compared to 22% of the least affluent. 81% of the most affluence hoped their child would go to university, compared to 37% of the least affluent. In this general age range, it was observed that direct interactions between mother and child (making, reading, singing, homework) did not seem to vary much between the socio-economic groups and therefore were not likely to be part of the inequality.

Reading and libraries are particularly referenced by the first section on early years, the role of The Arts is present but generally less so.

8
Family Audiences: What have we learned?

The Family Arts Campaign is funded through Arts Council England's Audience Focus programme. Arts Council England is clear that the arts enrich people's lives, but it also recognises that the arts need to reach more people and attract even bigger audiences. Through audience segmentation it identified considerable potential to drive up the engagement of new and mainstream audiences, and specifically family audiences offered the greatest opportunity for expanding engagement. 319 organisations had signed up to the Family Arts Standards (a list of 12 standards, from programming to practicalities) which are designed to help families know what they should expect from an arts organisation. The Family and Childcare Trust were/remain involved in the development of the standards.

Some headlines from the Audience Survey (sent out from a range of organisations, 222 responses)

Top 5 things that families value about their arts experiences:

86%	whole family engagement, togetherness, quality family time
64%	enjoyment, fun
54%	involve children with the arts, introduce them to the arts
47%	educational for children
31%	creative, especially creative in a way not possible at home

Top 5 factors influencing decisions about events attended as a family

71%	to see a specific event/performance/exhibition
60%	ticket/entry price made it affordable for the whole family to attend
54%	something to do with the children
50%	to spend time with friends/family
37%	have visited before and wanted to go again

Top 5 factors that prevent families from attending art events

45%	difficult to find out what's on
45%	timing of events is wrong
37%	events not suitable for family age-range
34%	better quality information needed
31%	not affordable

Awareness among audiences of the Family Arts Campaign and Standards were relatively low (13% were aware of the festival, 7% aware of the standards) although the majority of organisations involved felt that participation had helped them reach new audiences (35% of the organisations reported an increase in sales).or make other improvements to their families offer. 8% of the organisations on the database were defined as 'Heritage, museum and library', so there is some libraries input in this area. 15% were defined as 'Education' which ranged from primary to university age institutions. Time for the campaign and festival to 'bed in' was a noted response, suggesting that initiatives need to be sustained in the long run to achieve maximum impact and audience recognition.

In summary, this report reflects the impact of an influential and recent campaign across the arts sector to increase ambitions around (broadly) both quality and quantity of family oriented work. Its universality is not guaranteed, though the role of local authorities is noted as particularly important despite (or perhaps because) of a reported decrease in LA funding over the period.

Funding arts and culture in a time of austerity

Harvey, A, NLGN, (2016)

This report was produced by the National Local Government Network and Arts Council England. It is noted that the data from 2015 (and previous) represents the situation at this particular time, in the knowledge that at least two more years of cuts were planned.

"Local government has borne the brunt of public spending cuts since the 2008 financial crash, and especially since the 2010 Spending Review. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, there was a 20 per cent reduction in spending by local authorities in England between 2009/10 and 2014/15. Taking into account population growth, spending per person has reduced by 23 per cent."

"Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) figures show that total spending by councils in England on arts and culture development and support, theatres and public entertainment, on museums and galleries, and on the library service has declined from £1.42 billion to £1.2 billion, a 16.6 per cent reduction. In fact, the biggest surprise is that the rate of reduction is lower than that for spending overall, which suggests that councils have tried to protect these services where they can."

At the national level then, it is fair to say that cultural spending by local authorities has fallen, though maybe slightly less than we might have expected and arguably has even been cut less (proportionately) than other areas. Specific figures for libraries are not included, though in the definition of arts and culture used here, library services accounted for the largest proportion and may also have seen the greatest proportional reduction (Figure 2).

The data also shows that National Portfolio Organisations have even increased their income over this same period, suggesting that an increasingly entrepreneurial approach is showing returns, at least in the short term. This is somewhat reflected in Local Authorities own expenditures, which were also expected to increase slightly in cash terms by 2019/20. The report suggests that this would come from a mix of increased council tax (specifically for social care), retaining 100% of business rates (from 2019) and asset sales.

The proposed new ways of working are briefly outlined with reference to a few real world examples. Transferring arts and cultural services to social enterprise, charitable or mutual organisations are suggested under 'New Delivery Models'. Commercial activities are referenced under 'New Income Streams' though it is difficult to establish what proportion this accounts for. Cultural/tourism taxes or levies on hotels and restaurants are suggested though no concrete examples in the UK are provided. Other new income streams revolve around incorporating alongside other public or charitable funding streams such as health. 'New Partnerships' are mentioned, with the brief suggestion that a more open membership or partnership body would be more effective in raising the profile of a city.

Libraries and the Arts are mentioned throughout, though schools and education only peripherally.

10.

Tree Child evaluation report

Maughan & Fletcher, The Spark, (2014)

Tree Child was a creative arts project that integrated input from school children into a play that was toured to libraries in Leicester in July 2013. The research process was more formative than that of a typical evaluation project, in that the concept, management and delivery of a schools/libraries touring programme was somewhat still under development during the process.

886 adults and children attended the 19 shows (which is 80% capacity), an average of 47 per show. The library staff indicated that the show worked well in their venues, as did the creative team.

Two schools were involved in the development of the project; Hazel and Spinney Hill. The respective city libraries for these schools were Westcotes and St Barnabas respectively. Evaluation aimed to uncover whether school childrens assessed scores improved (in reading and writing) and whether libraries attracted more new children to the Summer Reading Challenge.

The results of all 48 children (25 had participated in the Tree Child workshops, 23 had not) were examined to see if there was any difference in performance. The data obtained from Hazel Primary School showed that the level of improvement between the testing points was higher for seven measures (of eight) for those children who had participated in Tree Child (Spark) compared to those who had not (Non Spark). Data was not collected for Spinney Hill.

St Barnabas and Westcotes saw a 42% and 23% increase in numbers of children participating in the Summer reading challenge respectively (year on year). It was noted that St Barnabas library had a more direct relationship with Spinney Hill school whereas Hazel/Westcotes relationship was less strong, possibly related to their locations. The other city libraries saw both increases and decreases, for numerous reasons and it is impossible to attribute any particular gain to Tree Child specifically. Nevertheless, that both saw an increase reinforces are assumptions behind the supposed benefits of the project.

Many of the Learning Outcomes and subsequent recommendations have been realised in AIF and remain relevant for similar projects (paraphrased below):

- Fundamental importance of effective partnership working

- Partners understanding of the local context

- Connecting with existing opportunities beyond the immediate scope of the project (such as the Summer Reading Challenge)

- Focusing the ambition of partners to a broader calendar of activities in the local area

- The need for new practices to address local needs in terms of both staff development and measurable outcomes

Schools, libraries and the Arts are discussed throughout but it can be noted again that the formative nature of the research and the project itself mean the end report reflects much of this development and experimentation.

11.
Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: the role of reading

Sullivan & Brown, Institute of Education, (2013)
(This research is also summarised in "Reading for pleasure: Research impact case study" March 2015" also by the Institute of Education.)

The report states that the impact of socio-economic inequalities on educational attainment and cognitive scores have been documented by many studies, and that the explanation of these differences remains a central problem in the sociology of education. There is a continuing debate over the exact role and importance of various educational, economic and cultural resources. This study takes a unique (at the time of writing) life-course approach to reading and cognitive development (vocabulary, spelling and maths) over time; at its heart using data from the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70)

The 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70) follows the lives of more than 17,000 people born in England, Scotland and Wales in a single week of 1970. Since the birth survey in 1970, there have been eight surveys (or 'waves') at ages 5, 10, 16, 26, 30, 34, 38 and 42. The study mostly focuses on a subset of 6,000 who took cognitive tests at the age of 16 (as well as earlier stages). The 1970 cohort study is described as rich in cognitive test scores throughout the early years and also collected data on parents education, parents own reading and a range of socio-economic factors. It is noted that generally in later years, test results may be affected as individuals willingness to participate may drop off. Mathematics scores are also included in the analysis; with the rationale that unlike the 'passive cultural transmission' of reading and language, promotion of success in mathematics is typically more of a conscious and discrete effort.

Four models of linear regression were carried out, to test the dependence of various factors. For instance, it is well established that earlier high test scores relate to later attainment but a model could control for this while examining the impact of other factors. Model 2, 3 and 4 are the most relevant to AIF. Model 2 found that how often a child read at age five was significant across all three test scores. Model 3 found that reading at age ten and sixteen were significant. Model 4 may described as the most 'stringent' of the models and controls for most factors, including the childs own level of progression

between age 5 and 10. In this model, economic resources are no longer significant and the two main influences remaining are the parents education and the childs own reading behaviour. Therefore the assumption is not just that more academically able children read more, but that leisure reading is linked to cognitive progress during adolescence, regardless of their pre-existing levels of attainment or reading. The effect sizes explain that the relative impact of a parental degree is linked to increased scores of 4.4-1.7% across tests while childhood reading increased scores by 14.5-8.6%.

The report concludes that parental cultural and educational resources are more influential than material resources for linguistic fluency and this is specifically true compared to other academic skills such as mathematics. The home reading culture was significantly linked to test scores and had a relatively strong role in mediating the influence of parents' education. It is noted that the findings are particularly important in the context of other research that has suggested children's reading for pleasure has declined in recent years.

Libraries and The Arts are not referenced though the discussion on home reading environments and cultural capital in general would be of relevance.

Cultural education in England

Henley, D, DFE/DCMS, (2012) and Government response

This independent review of Cultural Education in England follows on from the independent review of Music Education in England, which the author completed in 2010. The review was requested by both the Secretary of State for Education and the Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries. The introduction states a clear declaration of interest in the inherent values of a cultural education across academic, physical and social well-being. These skills are linked to the development in the UK of a 'world-beating' Creative and Cultural Industries sector. Cultural Education is scoped to include: archaeology, architecture and the built environment, archives, craft, dance, design, digital arts, drama and theatre, film and cinemas, galleries, heritage, libraries, literature, live performance, museums, music, poetry and the visual arts. 654 individuals and organisations provided a written response to the author while 121 people discussed the report with the author.

The three particular sets of benefits that Cultural Education can provide are described as: "The first is knowledge-based and teaches children about the best of what has been created. The second part of Cultural Education centres on the development of analytical and critical skills, which additionally have a direct relevance across other subjects outside the scope of this Review. The third element of Cultural Education is skills based and enables children to participate in and to create new culture for themselves." Earlier in the report, these are summarised as: knowledge, understanding and skills. It is stressed that the quality of cultural interactions are key, with the expectation that poor experiences at a young age will very likely 'turn off' individuals to similar activities into their adulthood. This is of increased importance when the activity is new, or being experienced for the first time.

Greatly summarising the rest of the report, and the 24 specific recommendations in particular, Cultural Education is an attempt to better 'join up' thinking in policy and practice across the DFE and schools along with the DCMS and their sponsored bodies (Arts Council, BFI, English Heritage etc). Cultural Education will be recognised by a cross-party group, a national level plan, the arms-length/sponsored bodies forming a new partnership which may provide a 'cultural education passport', a shared web resource, new local partnerships (Local Cultural Education Partnerships). The less certain areas of recommendations are, perhaps unsurprisingly, those that push further into the curriculum, for instance that Dance and Drama are promoted as full subjects rather than as parts of Physical Education or English respectively. The involvement of OFSTED in guidance and inspections around Cultural Education is also less certain in the governments' immediate response. The National Governors Association also produced a report "Cultural Education for Governors"

While The Arts and Schools are at the heart of these reports, Libraries are perhaps considered more as receiving venues rather than places that 'produce' culture. The value of reading for pleasure or literature in general, arguably, seems secondary to performance or visual arts. While many of the suggestions may seem relatively straightforward, in an international context, it may interesting to consider how other countries approach cultural education and how the underlying concepts are articulated. Considerable debate remains to be had around how the UK education system compares internationally, and in what direction any changes or rebalancing of the curriculum, towards or away from the arts and culture, should take.

13.
Reading: the next steps

Department for Education, (2015)

The foreword by Nick Gibb clearly outlines the importance of reading in government policy:

"Schools have no more fundamental responsibility than teaching children to read, and the government has taken decisive action to provide the necessary support"

The key statistic used here references data from 2014 suggesting that only one in ten children who fail to achieve a level 4 in English at the end of primary school, will go on to achieve five 'good' (A*-C) GCSEs including English and Mathematics.

The executive summary goes on to state that despite progress, international benchmarks demonstrate that standards of literacy in England are behind those of many of our international competitors. It is reiterated that systematic synthetic phonics is the most effective method for teaching children to read and following from this, that the approach to increasing speed and fluency is to 'instil a passion for reading'. Primary schools are targeted to set up book clubs for key stage 2 pupils and to arrange library membership for all their year 3 pupils.

The report claims some success in the years since 2010, having closed the attainment gap between the most disadvantaged students and their peers. Later in the report this is stated as a reduction of the gap from 15 percentage points to a gap of 10, between 2011 and 2014. However, it is stated that there has been 'a decade of stagnation' (2002-2012) in both relative and absolute assessment scores despite substantial increases on spending on education over the same period. The international comparisons are drawn from OECD PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). [1] Some of this stagnation is suggested to be related to historically low expectations of primary schools. There is also great variation at the local authority level and individual schools so presumably some more local knowledge and literacy initiatives are to be welcomed. A considerable range of academic research is cited which underpins the ongoing emphasis on synthetic phonics teaching.

Reading enjoyment is detailed under the heading of 'Developing mature readers'. The work of Clark & De Zoysa for the National Literacy Trust is specifically referenced as evidence supporting the 'virtuous circle': children who read more, attain more, encouraging them to read even more. (enjoyment, attitudes, behaviour and attainment). Stimulating an enjoyment of reading is doubly beneficial. An earlier PISA survey (2009) is referenced, finding from 15 year old students from across the globe, the difference between those who said they never read for enjoyment and those who read for up to 30 minutes a day was suggested to be equivalent to just over a year's schooling.

Outside of the home and the school, the role of libraries is also discussed. Whilst somewhat obvious, the range of books that a child reads (and presumably has available to them via a library) will make a difference to the overall amount that a child reads and their respective reading age. Young people who used their public library were nearly twice as likely to be reading outside the classroom every day. The ongoing effects as children reach secondary school and start to encounter more complex texts such as poetry, historical literature and plays are covered to the end of the report.

[1] The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an ongoing triennial survey that assesses the extent to which 15 year old students near the end of compulsory education have acquired key knowledge and skills that are essential for full participation in modern societies. Across the areas, around 540,000 students are assessed, forming the basis for comparison. This programme identifies 3 high performing countries as China, Estonia and Singapore.

14.

Envisioning the library of the future

[Phase 1, 2 & 3] ACE, (2016)

Phase 1&2 of this report is mostly focuses on the expert/professional view and is produced by Ipsos MORI and Shared Intelligence, Phase 3 mostly focuses on the public/user view and is produced by Involve and Dialogue by Design. Both are commissioned by Arts Council England. Starting with Phase 1&2, In 'notes and thanks' the 'library sector' is defined as; frontline and managerial public library staff, library user groups, academics with an interest in libraries, writers and authors with close connections to libraries, library students, third sector organisations connected to libraries, community activists and cultural organisations with connections to libraries. This is a useful definition for the report to take forward and illustrates the range of stakeholders.

The review focuses on innovation within libraries and external changes to society, economy and technology in the next 10 years. These stakeholders/participants were presented a range of key trends; population growth, demographic change, increasing poverty, low economic growth, constraints on public spending, changing consumer behaviour, longer working hours, 'the digital divide' and more besides. Their feedback presents the backbone of this document and there is a considerable degree of useful commentary around the details of each of these diverse and wide ranging trends. The major challenges identified can be summarised as a need for 'asymmetric leadership' [2], extending the appetite to adapt across the sector, specific skills deficits in community engagement, digital technology and (broadly) marketing, and finally that overall communication and knowledge sharing across the sector could be usefully improved.

Of particular relevance to AIF, is the experience of both libraries and arts organisations in the risks and opportunities of collaboration. Both may be juggling multiple outcomes and delivering significant outcomes 'for free' that other services benefit from, but make no contribution towards (job seeking, health and wellbeing, childrens centre activities). In general there is a sense that cultural organisations can have powerful if broadly dispersed benefits that represents a potentially unfair high burden of evidence for organisations to effectively capture. The report also comments that the national view of declining library use does not fairly reflect the reality that those running 'libraries of the future now' are experiencing and that decline is not inevitable.

Phase 3 reports on the outcomes of four 'deliberative dialogue' workshops each with around 40 members of the public in Newcastle, Stratford-upon-Avon, Totnes and London. The workshops aimed to uncover the views and opinions of participants towards the library service. The five central themes emerging from discussions can be summarised as: the physicality or environment of the library space, the educational and enjoyment value to children and young people specifically, the collection and offering of culture, equality of opportunity and access, the tension of change and continuity within libraries. It is interesting to see many of the issues raised by librarians reflect albeit through a different 'lens' by the varied users of libraries and to consider how a project like AIF sits within these important themes. The relation of schools and libraries to each other, in terms of potential duplication and 'fun' education vs 'serious' education is recognised and discussed. Many participants noted the excitement children feel about the library and how tertiary activities like storytelling, displays or reading challenges can have in building the habit of library usage.

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[2] Mobilising resources behind libraries' core purpose while meeting the particular needs of individual communities.

Summer Reading Challenge 2015 Participation report

The Reading Agency, (2015)

All partners in AIF were aware of the Summer Reading Challenge and commented positively on it's impact both in raw attendance/library card numbers and for providing a national campaign and shared focus across the libraries sector in terms of benchmarking performance across areas.

The Reading Agency and the UK public library network have organised the Summer reading challenge since 1999. The challenge is targeted at children aged 4-11 and in stated to combine the traditional offer of free access to books with fun social activities and a creative online element.

The headline figures for 2015 are as follows. in 2015, 99% of UK local authorities took part in the Summer Reading Challenge and the economies of scale involved suggest that the core material costs for libraries are less than £1 per child. 804,657 children participated of whom 437,602 (57%) completed the challenge by reading six books. An estimated 62,418 children signed up as new members during the challenge. (7.7% of all participants) 846 children used the challenge to achieve an 'Arts Award Discover' award in 23 authorities; it was noted this figure would likely increase as children may finish these in the autumn term. Other noteworthy figures include; 22,762 under 4s participated in a specific pre-school targeted scheme and that there were nearly 17,000 downloads of a related app for children.

Supplementary reports present the data on a regional basis. The East Midlands saw 54,021 participating. Of this, 43% were boys compared to the national 42% and 58% completed the challenge compared to 57% nationally. 3,615 new library members were recorded in the East Midlands. It is assumed that the reader will be the one who cross-examines and benchmarks their performance against national targets, though these reports only address headline data.

The report contains several references to other literature, most of which is also covered in this literature review around reading for pleasure and it's relation to education achievement, socio-economic position and access to managerial or professional jobs. In particular, the Arts Councils proposed Quality principles for work by, with and for children and young people are mentioned.

16.
Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth

The Warwick Commission, (2015)

The Warwick Commission on 'The Future of Cultural Value' was a 12 month inquiry, led by Warwick University, launched in 2013, with the final report produced in 2015. This included consultation with over 200 individuals across the arts, heritage, creative industries, government bodies and academics, four evidence days and three public debates as well as targeted evidence and research reviews. The foreword summarises three main insights from the process; one, that significant public and commercial benefits from the creative and cultural sectors are not fully recognised, two, that culture and creativity both exist in an ecosystem, feeding and depending on each other and three, that the links and synergies between both could be better identified and encouraged.

Five goals are identified by the report, and these are summarised in the first section of the report, with later sections providing detail on each. Some key evidence is selected below:

Ecosystem: DCMS 2013 estimate of GVA of the Cultural and Creative industries was £76.9bn, representing 5% of the UK economy. Direct public spend on arts, culture, museums and libraries is only around 0.3% of the total public spend.

Diversity and participation: Segmentation based on Taking part data suggests that the most culturally active segment accounted for 28% of attendance to live theatre, 44% of attendance to music and 28% of attendance to visual arts – whilst only accounting for 8% of the general population. Libraries are mentioned here, referring to a fall from 48% (2005/6) to 35% (2013/14) in the number of adults using a library at least once in the past twelve months; also mentioned as a factor is the closure of up to 272 libraries across the country between 2010/13. The percentages of children aged 5-10 participating in dance, music, theatre and arts and crafts all dropped anywhere from 5-20% from 2008/9 and 2013/14.

Education and skills development: There is an emphasis here on combinations of subjects, where few students are likely to take both arts and science subjects (although this is examined at AS level and University). Using PISA rankings alone (Programme for International Student Assessment) may be 'missing' the importance of entrepreneurial and cross-discipline skills needed for the future.

Digital culture: There are too many variables to cover here, but most cultural organisations (73% of 947) surveyed in the UK felt digital activities have had a major, positive impact on their work, though barriers remain regarding funding and time to adopt or develop a robust approach. Libraries providing free access to high speed internet are specifically mentioned as critical for equality of access.

Making the local matter: The economic impact of cultural regeneration of mega-events such as the capital of culture are relatively well understood, and a quarter of Local Enterprise Partnerships stated that the creative industries were a priority sector. The impact of London and rebalancing funding and audiences to the regions is noted.

Each section is followed by specific policy recommendations rather than a conclusion for the report as a whole; arguably this helps to underline the overall complexity of an enquiry into something as difficult to pin down as 'Cultural Value'. Overall, there is a lot that AIF could contribute towards these interlocking policy issues from cultural education, partnerships and skill sharing across cultural organisations, scaling up investment from initial pilots, new business models, placemaking with local venues and reaching non-traditional audiences.

Aside from the final report, other supporting documents can also be accessed the following link.

https://warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/resources/

17.

Independent Library Report for England

DCMS, (2014)

This report was jointly commissioned by DCMS and DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government), and was led by William Sieghart and an expert panel. Over seven months of visits, discussions and submissions of over 200 pieces of written evidence were included.

Two themes are identified at the outset: that there have been too many library reviews recently that have 'come to nothing' and that decision makers at a national and local level are insufficiently aware of the value a good library service offers modern communities. The report states that in England, over a third of the population visits their local library, rising to nearly a half in poorer areas. Localism is identified as a library's greatest strength but also at risk of becoming its weakness. It is suggested that coherence at a national level is required around both strategic leadership and economies of scale; many benefits will not be realised without this.

It is unsurprising that the publication of the report was commented on by numerous organisations; The Reading Agency, CILIP, Public Libraries News and a number of other media reports. Positives were generally noted as an establishment of a leadership taskforce, consolidating and driving national standards for wifi, computer and e-lending access and the acknowledgement that libraries deliver a wide range of services often to particularly vulnerable and excluded communities.

Negatives stemmed from the failure to directly address the larger structural issues of shrinking government funding (particularly for 'secondary' services), limited reference to underlying legislation and statutory provision (and how poor services would be held to standards), expecting broader expertise from librarians whilst their numbers reduce and a general uneasiness around the changing core purpose of public libraries (though the SCL Universal Offers were referred to as an independently developed positive.) Other commentators have noted that some recommendations are arguably recycled from previous reviews (improving spaces and furnishings) remaining unimplemented presumably due to limited political buy in or available funding. Links between schools and libraries are mentioned as a general positive but given the natural fit with education, this link is arguably underdeveloped.

All the recommendations are of some relevance to AIF, more as an overarching background to the 'state of libraries' though there are few that are directly or immediately relevant (or they have already 'happened' so to speak). 11 case studies are presented briefly at the end of the report including specific regional efforts and the work of national bodies.

Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021

Libraries Taskforce, (2016)

The Libraries Taskforce was set up as an outcome of the Sieghart report "Independent Library Report for England" (2014) and this document "Libraries Deliver…" details their strategic ambition for libraries to 2021. Responses to the report came from The Reading Agency, Arts Council England, The Bookseller and CILIP. Many praised the overall vision but critics referenced the delay in its production and failing to address more fundamental issues of falling staff numbers, poor quality buildings, and book stocks. (Note that a draft of the report was open for consultation for 10 weeks, and some responses have been detailed in Annex 3) It is easy to note the similarities with the earlier Sieghart report, perhaps pre-empting these criticisms, the authors also provide Annex 1: Assumptions about the future (This appears to be in the draft report, but does not appear in the final report) outlining several issues which are relatively non-negotiable; eg 'Library budgets will continue to be constrained' or 'Competition will come from technology, entertainment and information services' and more besides.

Some key headlines are stated at the outset: Nearly 60% of the population holds a current library card and libraries received 224.6 million visits in 2014-2015, more than Premier league football games, the cinema and the top 10 UK tourist attractions combined (27.5m, 151.3m and 42.7m respectively). Local governments spent £762 million on libraries in the same time, around 27p per week per person or under 1% of Englands local government net expenditure. The majority of the report covers the 7 Outcomes: Cultural and creative enrichment, Increased reading and literacy, Improved digital access and literacy, Helping everyone achieve their full potential, Healthier and happier lives, Greater prosperity, Stronger, more resilient communities. These are summarized with a few headings under what 'Success in 2021 will look like'. These are linked to actions and challenges throughout the report, which can be seen in more detail in the action plan. The action plan (as of December 2016) showed 25 actions, 5 challenges to central government (CG) and 12 challenges to local government (CG), some of which are marked as priorities.

Focusing on those items that seem most immediately relevant to AIF, Outcome 1: Cultural and creative enrichment is the logical place to start. Success in 2021 will involve more adults and children accessing cultural experiences and events through libraries, especially those from more disadvantaged backgrounds and libraries will be seen as active partners with professional and amateur arts organisations. Outcome 2: Increased reading and literacy includes a focus on children and young adults, specifically stronger partnerships between libraries and schools. AIF clearly delivers against these and perhaps also against Outcome 7: Stronger, more resilient communities through placemaking, targeting disadvantaged areas and providing activities that help build understanding between different generations and cultures.

At the time of writing, The Libraries Taskforce has made a clear statement of purpose from a difficult starting point and has not been without criticism. The transparency of aims, actions, responsibilities and willingness to respond to criticism should be acknowledged. To divide up arts organisations and libraries for a second, that 'creative and culture' and 'reading and literacy' are effectively separated out into Outcome 1&2 may show a positive step change; that libraries can be a place for both 'soft, cultural' and 'hard, educational' benefits to be realized. One does not take priority over the other however it is useful to genuinely consider the differences of each rather than grouping them together or attempting to make actions of one support the goals of the other.

The Beating Heart of the School

Libraries APPG, (2014)

This report has been supported and brought together by CILIP, who provide the secretariat for the APPG. The foreword by Lord Graham Tope highlights two contemporary arguments for the provision of quality libraries: one, that in an increasingly digital world, young people need to be able to evaluate and understand unprecedented amounts of information. Two, that literate and knowledgeable people underpin the ability of businesses to recruit the right people, contributing to the success of the economy.

There are four recommendations of the report:

1. There are no definitive figures on the number or proportion of schools that have a school library or school librarian. This should become part of schools annual data submission.

2. The role of school libraries and librarians should be examined in the supporting of; reading, literacy, enjoyment of reading, information literacy, access to knowledge as well as; self esteem, confidence, sense of safety and wellbeing.

3. OFSTED should include the school library in their inspection framework.

4. The Department for education should have a member of staff acting as the lead for libraries.

The evidence behind these recommendations is discussed throughout the rest of the report, beginning with some key findings from The UK National Survey of School Libraries in 2010. Primary schools: 7% fall over three years in the number of school libraries with a library space. Relatively few had a designated school librarian, 90% had accessed professional support via the Schools Library Service. Secondary schools: More than 25% do not operate for a full school day and only 25% operate an extended school day. Most budgets for books and other resources have been frozen or cut. These figures are broadly confirmed by the 2012 School Library Association Survey.

The report references a 2008 paper 'School Libraries Work!' from Scholastic Library Publishing that incorporated findings from around two decades of studies in 19 US states and 1 Canadian province, showing that well resourced libraries managed by qualified librarians results in higher achievement on standardised tests. Other US studies have suggested that the most vulnerable students have been found to benefit proportionately more than students generally. In the UK however, there was not considered to be a research study of similar, sufficient scale to make such claims, though there are various 'pockets' of evidence.

In the context of AIF, an earlier inquiry (APPG for Education, 2011 'Overcoming the barriers of literacy') found that both libraries in the school and in the community have a positive effect on reading: "The enthusiasm and responsiveness of the librarian generally had an impact on the attitudes of the students towards the library and reading". The role of the professional is further highlighted in section 3. Their role in supporting the national curriculum is, unsurprisingly, a core emphasis, and is of particular importance for out-of-class/school learning and among pupils with less access to books or the internet at home. Linking to public libraries is referenced but not particularly developed, or it is unclear whether the public library or school (or both) are to be 'community hubs'. Annex B presents figures from the NFER survey of head teachers, in particular, Figure 5, shows head teachers relative ranking of libraries providing a 'wider cultural offer; events etc' compared to their predominant functions in 'reading for pleasure' and 'supporting the curriculum'.

19.
Research evidence on reading for pleasure

Department for Education, (2012)

This review of approximately 60 other reports and journal articles is composed in two major sections: firstly around trends and evidence of the benefits of independent reading among primary and secondary aged children. The second section covers evidence on what works in promoting reading for pleasure. The benefits of reading for pleasure are largely articulated in educational terms and the impacts specifically on frequency, level of enjoyment, attainment and reading achievement. Personal, social and emotional development are also noted.

Trends in reading for pleasure reiterates that the majority of children enjoy reading, though this likely diminishes as they get older. Boys and children from lower socio-economic backgrounds have been found to enjoy reading less. Some evidence suggests that children from Asian backgrounds have more positive attitudes to children from White, mixed or Black backgrounds. However, there are a few reports on longer term trends may suggest that reading for pleasure among children is declining (both in the UK and internationally).

The role of a range of types of reading are investigated (magazines, websites, text messages as well as novels/fiction). Those who receive free school meals are less likely to read fiction outside of the classroom. Most young people read between one and three books in a month. There are a few studies that investigate the reasons children give for their own reading, suggesting that they understand the role of reading in skills development and new subject knowledge but that their emotional response was a key draw and that effective reading promotion programmes need to be actively desired or sought out by children. The gender difference in reading for pleasure indicates that when comparing boys to girls, boys enjoy reading less, have different habits, read less fiction and tend to read easier books.

Measures that can help promoting reading for pleasure cover a smaller number of reports and are as follows. Having books of their own and having higher numbers of books in the home are linked to enjoyment, frequency and attainment. Independent choice is important. Rewards related to literacy such as books or book vouchers are more effective than unrelated rewards. Parents, families and teachers are all important in developing reading for pleasure. The impact of online reading habits is relatively scarce and has had mixed results; one report suggested a negative association whereas another suggested the opposite.

Library usage is specifically covered by one study (Clark and Hawkins, 2011). This was based on an online study with over 17,000 responses from children aged 8 to 16. It found that nearly half (48%) of children do not use public libraries at all and that this declines from KS2 (63%) to KS3 (42%) and KS4 (24%). Non-library users were more than three times more likely to only read when in class, whereas those who used the library were nearly twice as likely to be reading outside of class. Children receiving Free School Meals (FSM) were no more or less likely to use the library compared to their peers.

Overall this report provides a useful summary of current research around reading for pleasure; there are also valuable insights into the role of libraries though very little on the impact of the arts.

Whose cake is it anyway? Summary Report'' (2011) and ''Our Museum: A five-year perspective from a critical friend

Lynch, B/Paul Hamlyn Foundation, (2015)

Both documents relate to the 'Our Museum' Paul Hamlyn foundation programme, which ran between 2012 and 2015 with around 12 museums (at various stages). The origins of the programme go back to 2009 with the PHF commissioning a study of engagement in museums and art galleries, followed by an innovative process incorporating participatory theatre techniques to allow both professionals and community partners to share an open and frank debate.

At the outset, the report states that despite considerable investment in museums and galleries participatory, community outreach or public engagement programmes, the predominant mode of relation between institutions and the public has been one of producing for a passive public. In some respects, it is argued that the creation of separate funding streams for participatory work has in fact helped keep this on the periphery of organisations.

All 12 organisations involved in the discussion were described as well-reputed, well-publicized and innovative short-term projects, though the purpose of the investigation was to get away from simply recounting these successes. The method drew on participatory drama (Augosto Boal) requiring staff and community partners to work together and act out scenes in which their organisations efforts were described. Some of the scenes are recorded here and while any specific insights are of course lost, the deeper themes and debates around participation come to the forefront. One in particular included someone in the role of a professional slicing up a cake to be passively 'doled out' to those in the community, prompting the response "Whose cake is it anyway?". Another scene showed the users freely selecting cosmetic differences to an illustration of a car, with the professional later over-riding or restricting many of these choices and of course, not allowing any changes to the actual direction of the vehicle. Dragons-den style panels with critical friends, discussion and questionnaires were also used and in part developed by participants. The headline themes can be summarised as:

Project funding: 'short-termism', lack of strategic planning, need for time to understand local needs and long-term local relations, insecurity among front-line staff.

'Empowerment-lite': Assuming information coming in rather than proactively finding out, feeling 'used' by partners, exaggeration of collaboration and reciprocity. Smaller organisations leading: Larger organisations have to 'serve many masters', smaller organisations may be more authentic, no one-size fits all, unsure how to scale up, if at all.

The second report is more narrative and is principally from the authors own reflections from the ongoing debate in the intervening years. The challenges remain in increasingly austere times to make the time for reflective practice. Occasional interventions from critical friends in convening reflective periods for both organisation and community partners are proposed to be of ongoing benefit, though it still remains to be seen what methods will allow for this dialogue to continue more 'naturally'. If readers are further interested in the best-practices and lessons learned, they should also read the final Our Museum Report (2016). It is useful, from AIFs point of view, that these reports do not dwell on the specifics of any museum or galleries particular projects. Instead the focus is on organisational challenges have relevance to both the view of The Sparks interactions with Libraries, and that of the Libraries with their communities.

The importance of high-quality arts education – speech'', Link, Nick Gibb/DFE, (2017) and ''The Two Cultures: Do schools have to choose between the EBacc and the arts

Fellows, E/NSN (2017)

A speech by Schools Minister Nick Gibb was given at the Music and Drama Expo on 9/2/17 and includes key references to the "Two Cultures…" report produced by the New Schools Network, which was published a few days earlier. Beginning with the speech, much of the content relates to policy around music and the performing arts. Funding for music education hubs has been increased and will be sustained until 2020. The Music and Dance scheme, Dance and Drama award, National Youth Orchestra and Youth Music Theatre UK and In Harmony are all mentioned as current direct, specialist interventions. Of course specialist schemes will not reach everyone, and the role of the national curriculum is addressed with some changes made to art & design, music and drama both at GCSE and A level.

The supposed impact of the Ebacc on arts education is a key point of the speech. The Ebacc itself was introduced to curb the number of 'vocational' subjects being taken at GCSE, leading to concerns over grade inflation and a rapid take up of 'equivalent' qualifications. The Ebacc is; a not yet compulsory, measure of the percentage of KS4 pupils obtaining GCSEs in five subject groups (English, Maths, the Sciences, the Humanities and Foreign Languages) from which pupils need to take seven GCSEs (generally including two Science and two English). It is expected that pupils will typically take one to three additional GCSEs on top of this, for eight to ten in total. As a result, subjects outside the Ebacc are likely to not be seen as a priority, as numerous campaigns argued over this time. Gibb draws on the "Two Cultures…" report to refute these claims. Both the report and speech were widely commented on by various groups such as the Creative Industries Federation, Cultural Learning Alliance and Arts Professional.

The "Two cultures" report, looks at changes from 2011/2-2015/6. The report finds that GCSE entries to arts subjects rose, and that more pupils were taking at least one arts GCSE over this time. At the same time, the number of GCSE arts teachers and the amount of arts contact time both fell. Pupils with high attainment in EBacc subjects had similar attainment in arts subjects and vice versa. The subjects defined as 'arts subjects' in line with the DFE definition as: Art & Design, Dance, Drama, Expressive & Performing Arts, Media and Music. English Literature is also examined separately. Design & Technology subjects are excluded, in line with DFE definitions whereas some 'anti-EBacc' campaigns include D&T [3] . Also of note is the variance in dates chosen for analysis, either pre or post the EBacc announcement, as this is thought to have changed pupils choices and schools decisions.

The EBacc remains a divisive topic though opinion seems to have mellowed over time, or has perhaps been overtaken by other debates in education policy. To rely on an individual point of view for evidence around this topic, particularly from campaign groups on both sides, can be misleading and readers are cautioned to, ideally, look more closely at the official data themselves. Libraries are not referenced and the schools focus is predominantly on secondary age education, though the general impact of the debate is surely of some relevance to primary ages.

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[3] For instance the Cultural Learning Alliance report showed a decline of nearly 100,000 GCSE entries in D&T between 2010 and 2016. D&T was still the single largest subject included in the analysis in both 2010 and 2016 despite this. It is interesting to also compare this with the debate around the exclusion or inclusion of numerous Crafts industries and occupations (SIC and SOC codes) from official DCMS estimates relating to employment and the economic impact of the 'Creative Industries'.

22.
My Primary School is at the Museum

Kings College London, (2016)

This report is based on the evaluation of the eponymous project, which at its core focused on three pilot-study partnerships between schools and museums in the UK, in Swansea, Liverpool and Southshields. The pupils ranged in age group as did the amount of time spent based at the museums (from 2 weeks to 3 months) during which they were taught a full core curriculum as they would have been in a traditional schools setting. The museums themselves varied, with Arbeia Roman Fort, Tate Liverpool and the National Waterfront Museum taking part. The project was reported on by the Independent and the Museums Association, and at the time of writing was shortlisted for a Museums and Heritage award. Details on precisely how the partnerships were arranged and how any additional funding was sourced in each environment (if there was any) are difficult to find, though the project as a whole was supported by the Kings College Cultural Spaces Programme.

The origins of the project are given detail, combining shared pressures felt by museums, somewhat lacklustre reflections on 'pattern book' school visits and the role of cultural education in general. The role of the Cultural Institute at Kings College is fairly central as a bridge between partners, bringing together higher education, cultural sector and statutory education providers. The overarching objectives were: "to explore whether or not there could be beneficial outcomes for primary school children and their families if they attend primary school in a museum, to test the hypothesis that the national curriculum can be satisfactorily delivered in a (local) museum setting, to establish another model of museum service delivery and simultaneously begin to explore ways of working to support schools in a tough economic climate with limited resources.". There were further specific objectives for the primary schools and museums respectively.

Each of three partnerships is given more detail, though we will focus on the more generic and universal outcomes. Summarising greatly, the museum benefits were: greater understanding of the age groups involved (from hosting for an extended period), making use of the museum in otherwise quiet periods (in one case during a month they were otherwise closed), professional development for museum staff (understanding the national curriculum, able to work in different roles) and extending their profile in the local community (through family and community awareness). School benefits were: an appreciation of museums (and other cultural spaces) as places for learning the wider curriculum (eg: museums not just for History but other subjects), confidence in teaching practice (in out-of-classroom sessions) and better relationships with parents and families (more likely to spend time at the school). Benefits to pupils were: enthusiasm for learning (new environment and pupil led learning) social and communication skills (various interactions with teachers, museum staff and to a degree, members of the public).

Practical and policy recommendations are made and an appendix of other school-museum collaborations is included. Many are of some relevance to AIF and broadly call for the benefits to be further extended, better understood and better recognised by both teaching and cultural professionals. The duration of the visits and the facilities and collections are obviously different to those of libraries, though this may be more or less relevant to some than others, with all libraries generally being encouraged to also think of themselves as cultural spaces in addition to local authority universal services. Could a library temporarily house a primary school class and what might the benefits and challenges be?

23.

Rising to the challenge: a look at the role of public libraries in times of recession.

Rooney-Browne, C, Library Review, (2009)

This paper makes a clear point of being published shortly after the official announcements that the UK and USA were entering their first recessions of the 21st century and that very little research had yet been carried out around public libraries in this most recent recession. Earlier research had investigated the impact of the Great Depression and business cycles, but is not comparable to a modern recession for a variety of reasons.

A 2002 paper by Lynch, on behalf of the American Libraries Association concluded there was not enough evidence on the matter to support a direct link between recession and increased library usage. The author states that a growing body of research is now able to make the case that libraries do see greater use during economic recession and the majority of the paper details the individual claims being made, primarily in the UK and US.

A wide range of anecdotal and media reports are briefly covered. One particular study, published in 2009, covered the beginning of the recession, comparing records from June-November 2007 to the same period in 2008. The 36 participating libraries (Washington State public libraries) found that: attendance increased by 7%, circulation/checkouts increased by 11%, virtual visits increased 20%, reference transactions increased 4%, the amount of time public computers were used increased 10% and the number of public computer users increased 14%. It is noted that a comparable study for the UK did not exist at the time, but a similar range of reports from individual libraries and authorities outlines a similar trend.

The paper then examines the 'why' of increased library use in times of recession. The MLA in the UK and the ALA in the USA produce comparable messages around borrowing resources rather than buying outright (books, magazines and other media), joining a reading group, searching for job or health information and so on. The ALA estimated the annual cost to the taxpayer at about

$31 or the cost of a single hardcover book. With direct relation to employment, job searching and applications are commonly online-preferred if not online only, as are related services such as applying for employment and other benefits. It is noted that users engage in some degree of research, training and preparation in the library, as well as the application itself. Libraries have deliberately responded too, offering financial advice and budgeting sessions and related texts, loaning out smart meters for utilities and producing advertising campaigns that proactively respond and attract their potential audiences, rather than simply 'passively' accepting the upturn and changing usage patterns.

Libraries alongside other public services are clearly at risk in times of recession. Research into the effect of economic crisis of the 1970s on libraries found that local authorities responded in a similar way to today, book funds cut, vacant positions not being replaced and opening hours reduced considerably. These challenges are broadly predicted to be repeated, though perhaps a greater urgency and awareness exists now to ensure that libraries are not seen as a 'soft touch' or an easy target for cuts. Overall, the paper highlights many ways in which libraries are meeting these challenges by adapting their core offers. Of relevance to AIF, is the common theme of increasing programmed events of all types, though family focused and arts-based events are encompassed within this. The challenging duality of increasing demand at a time of decreasing funds is a further theme yet some examples are given of proactive campaigning and selling the varied benefits of the service to both users and funders alike.

Library Closures: Third report of session 2012-13

Culture, Media and Sport Committee, (2012)

This inquiry responded to campaigning groups around the closure of local libraries though it also took the view that the wider debate around what constitutes a suitable library service was in need of examination. This took evidence from The Reading Agency, Voices for the Library, The Library Campaign, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, representatives of local authorities, the Local Government Association, the Arts Council and received 136 written submissions. Sue Charteris (led the inquiry into library closures in the Wirral) and Ed Vaizey MP.

The first section (Background) describes the duty and power of inquiry held by the secretary of state and how in recent history this has only been 'threatened' once, in Derbyshire and once to carry out an inquiry in reality in Wirral. The Charteris report is held to be an important example for other authorities to examine when considering if library closures will affect their statutory duties.

Broad statistics on library usage are discussed, such as the Taking Part survey which showed that over five years (2005/6 to 2010/11) adult library use declined 48.2% to 39.7% though in recent years no statistically significant decrease was found and childrens usage remained very high at 75.6%. Annie Mauger of CILIP stated that while there had been a year-on-year decline in visits and loans of 2.3% and 2.9% respectively, this contrasted with a 6.3% reduction in budget and 14% in stock acquisitions.

Further discussion covers the areas in which only looking at book loan figures will ignore the changing roles and other good work being done by libraries; arguably in areas in which this is most needed. The work of the Arts Council in broadening the view of the value libraries to their communities was commended (Envisioning the Library of the Future). It is stated that the total number of libraries and the total revenue funding has varied little over the last 35 years, with some notable exceptions. Opening hours have generally increased while staff numbers have decreased.

The second and third sections jointly address what a comprehensive and efficient service / a library service for the 21st century would mean. The terms (comprehensive and efficient) in the 1964 act are not defined, a situation about which opinions vary; whether a clearer definition is desired or needed and if so should it be provided through statute, guidance or left to local authorities judgement. It was discussed that while local authorities were generally best placed to make an assessment of their local needs, this needed to made with greater reference to guidance (CILIP, Charteris report, ACE). The details of an appropriate assessment of needs would incorporate a huge range of factors (transport, education, equality, literacy, employment and more). Several comments are made that many authorities are failing to do so whether they were actively closing libraries or not, and consultations with the public have been lacking. Statistics from CILIP suggested that when libraries close, many users often do not transfer to an alternative library. However, focusing only on buildings may skew any necessary cuts towards areas (staff, mobile libraries, facilities, opening hours) which might have a greater negative impact than the loss of a specific building.

The importance of front-line staff is highlighted, as is the significant proportion of libraries' budgets staff costs account for. Some examples in reducing these costs while aiming to maintain a high quality service are discussed.

The core value of libraries in offering access to books and other sources of information is reiterated, though all in the inquiry agreed that libraries now find a greater value in linking their resources and facilities to wider programmes reaching out into their local communities. Co-operation between library services was described as increasingly important though the pressure and focus on local finances meant that in some cases co-operation was 'politically difficult'. The tri-borough project of Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea was a commonly cited example of shared services 'done right'.

The role of the secretary of state and national-level enforcement in maintaining a 'comprehensive and efficient' library service is debated. The scale of budget cuts meant that some closures would be inevitable and the secretary could not intervene in every case brought forward. Local authorities preferred the current light-tough approach while referring to each other and relevant associations around best practice. Overall, the inquiry seems to agree that the role/powers of the secretary of state should continue to have a 'superintendent' role but to be more proactive around national issues (such as digital access for books, shared services).

The Arts Council's role, having only recently taken over from the MLA at this time, is outlined. The budget that ACE had for libraries at the time was "tiny", £230,000 or £76 per library, though a £6m fund for libraries through GFTA was underway. It is noted that despite the MLA being larger than ACE, there were no separate staff allocated (in the MLA) specifically to libraries. ACE's ambition was to be a 'libraries development agency' rather than as an OFSTED style inspectorate.

This document of 2012 details some issues that by the time of writing in 2017 have been resolved, one way or the other, even if the deeper debates and issues brought up will continue to be navigated for the foreseeable future. The 12 conclusions remain relevant for outlining the general environment in which libraries are operating in today. This author suggests that it is symptomatic of being a long overdue policy conversation that so much agreement can be found within this report. Interestingly, the primary areas for collaboration at this time are arguably given as being health and education, despite the 'new entry' of the Arts Council. Presumably since then, we would see the arts being slightly higher up the agenda; not that health and education are wholly unimportant to the Arts Council. The Society of Chief Librarians included a new 'Culture Offer' to their universal offers framework in early 2017. It is worth noting in the foreword of the 'Libraries Deliver' report, DCMS asserts their willingness to investigate statutory breaches under the 1964 act.

Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021

Libraries Taskforce, (2016)

The Libraries Taskforce was set up as an outcome of the Sieghart report "Independent Library Report for England" (2014) and this document "Libraries Deliver…" details their strategic ambition for libraries to 2021. Responses to the report came from The Reading Agency, Arts Council England, The Bookseller and CILIP. Many praised the overall vision but critics referenced the delay in its production and failing to address more fundamental issues of falling staff numbers, poor quality buildings, and book stocks. (Note that a draft of the report was open for consultation for 10 weeks, and some responses have been detailed in Annex 3) It is easy to note the similarities with the earlier Sieghart report, perhaps pre-empting these criticisms, the authors also provide Annex 1: Assumptions about the future (This appears to be in the draft report, but does not appear in the final report) outlining several issues which are relatively non-negotiable; eg 'Library budgets will continue to be constrained' or 'Competition will come from technology, entertainment and information services' and more besides.

Some key headlines are stated at the outset: Nearly 60% of the population holds a current library card and libraries received 224.6 million visits in 2014-2015, more than Premier league football games, the cinema and the top 10 UK tourist attractions combined (27.5m, 151.3m and 42.7m respectively). Local governments spent £762 million on libraries in the same time, around 27p per week per person or under 1% of Englands local government net expenditure. The majority of the report covers the 7 Outcomes: Cultural and creative enrichment, Increased reading and literacy, Improved digital access and literacy, Helping everyone achieve their full potential, Healthier and happier lives, Greater prosperity, Stronger, more resilient communities. These are summarized with a few headings under what 'Success in 2021 will look like'. These are linked to actions and challenges throughout the report, which can be seen in more detail in the action plan. The action plan (as of December 2016) showed 25 actions, 5 challenges to central government (CG) and 12 challenges to local government (CG), some of which are marked as priorities.

Focusing on those items that seem most immediately relevant to AIF, Outcome 1: Cultural and creative enrichment is the logical place to start. Success in 2021 will involve more adults and children accessing cultural experiences and events through libraries, especially those from more disadvantaged backgrounds and libraries will be seen as active partners with professional and amateur arts organisations. Outcome 2: Increased reading and literacy includes a focus on children and young adults, specifically stronger partnerships between libraries and schools. AIF clearly delivers against these and perhaps also against Outcome 7: Stronger, more resilient communities through placemaking, targeting disadvantaged areas and providing activities that help build understanding between different generations and cultures.

At the time of writing, The Libraries Taskforce has made a clear statement of purpose from a difficult starting point and has not been without criticism. The transparency of aims, actions, responsibilities and willingness to respond to criticism should be acknowledged. To divide up arts organisations and libraries for a second, that 'creative and culture' and 'reading and literacy' are effectively separated out into Outcome 1&2 may show a positive step change; that libraries can be a place for both 'soft, cultural' and 'hard, educational' benefits to be realized. One does not take priority over the other however it is useful to genuinely consider the differences of each rather than grouping them together or attempting to make actions of one support the goals of the other.

26.

Read on get on: A strategy to get England's children reading

Save the Children / National Literacy Trust, (2016)

"Read On. Get On. was launched in 2014 by a coalition of charities and education organisations committed to improving reading levels in the UK. The goal is to get all children reading well by the age of 11 by 2025, with an interim goal that all children will be achieving good levels of language, early literacy and reading development by the age of five, by 2020."

Chapter 6 of the strategy focuses on Primary School years, pointing to evidence that suggests the key drivers of readings skills at this age are (summarised):

- Effectiveness of teaching at school, especially regarding phonics and reading comprehension

- Continued emphasis on oral language skills for comprehension and decoding complex syntax

- Frequency of independent reading for enjoyment

- Parents' and carers' engagement in learning and home learning environment (Significant inequalities are apparent here regarding social class, ethnic background and gender)

- Parents' and carers' own reading skills and reading enjoyment

- Support for reading in the community, access to a diverse range of books including school and public libraries, advice on latest books, authors and related activities.

- Attitudes to reading, in the home, with peers and wider cultural attitudes.

Specific priorities are given related to these, but for AIF's purposes, we will look at: "Sustained strategy to dramatically increase reading for pleasure, especially for children who are not already excited by reading". This notes that while a child's motivation, connection and involvement with a text is key there is currently no consistent training or up-to-date resource for teachers in ways to build interest among different groups of pupils. The closure of school libraries and overall subject knowledge of English in primary schools is a significant factor. The final priority "Stronger support for Primary leadership" can also be of relevance, suggesting that not only head teachers but 'middle leaders' (or Heads of department) who specialise in English, literacy or reading are in a crucial position to help promote professional development but will need stronger support and possibly new qualifications.

Action 4 in the conclusions states that it is imperative that a consistent, national measure of children's reading is established as well as ways of tracking early progress. The measure of 'reading well' is suggested to go beyond a level 4b at KS2 [4], but should include measures for cognitive and affective processes as well. This point also notes that waiting for international comparison tables (presumably referring to PISA) to be produced every three years will be waiting too long to discover that children are being failed. Perhaps the subtext is that by the next PISA cycle, these measures could be included at an international level or that we need to wait to see the impact of other changes; here the emphasis is to act now rather than wait.

The National Literacy Trust has also worked with Experian to produce a map of English constituencies according to literacy need or their literacy vulnerability score. Ranked: Nottingham North (8), Nottingham East (15), Leicester West (23), Leicester South (85), Leicester East (105), Nottingham South (116).

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[4] Note in an earlier report "Reading England's Future" (2014) a level 4b was given as a measure of reading well and at the time was an increase of two steps above the then expected level 4.

Inspiring people, connecting communities (2013)
The Universal Offers for Public Libraries (2015)
New Universal Culture Offer (2016)

The Society of Chief Librarians.

These brief reports from the Society of Chief Librarians show an important and (in retrospect) a relatively straightforward trend in libraries policy over the last few years, yet nevertheless one that shows the dramatic changes in the sector or at the very least a perceived need to reform and restate the value of public libraries.

In 2013, SCL launched the Universal Offers for public libraries, as the key areas of service that customers and partners see as essential to a 21st century library service. At this point, four offers were included, some key points are summarised below:

Reading: A lively and engaging reading setting (eg: events), free books, free community space, participation in the Summer Reading Challenge and targeted services for vulnerable people.

Information: Careers and job seeking, health, personal finance, public information and government services, Access to Research.

Digital: Free internet access, online library services (inc. ebooks), training users in IT skills, 24/7 access through a virtual presence.

Health: Books on prescription, non-clinical community space for health and wellbeing groups, community outreach.

In 2015, SCL relaunched the Universal Offers, now with partnerships with Arts Council England, Association of Senior Children and Education Librarians (ASCEL), The Reading Agency and Share the Vision. The four offers from 2013 were mostly the same, though additions were: (note: 'Learning' is a new Offer, whereas the other two are different aims/strategies)

Learning: For children, young people and families, from baby/tots rhyme time, homework/revision clubs, coding clubs, opportunities for young people to organise their own learning activities and intergenerational learning opportunities.

Childrens Promise: Reading for pleasure and cultural opportunities, developing digital and creative skills, opportunity to be actively involved and to support children and young people's health and wellbeing. (This last point looks to be being developed further into a 'strand' of the universal Health Offer – Reading Agency, March 2017)

Six steps: Providing accessible physical and digital materials, designate a champion for blind and partially sighted people, consult with blind and partially sighted people on access strategies, support the annual RNIB 'Make a Noise in Libraries' fortnight.

In 2016, SCL announced it would be adding a universal Culture Offer to this and at the time of writing, this has not yet been finalised. Broadly, it seems the key factors here are that; libraries have a comparatively huge footfall of visitors, compared to traditional cultural venues, this visitor reach includes many who otherwise would not experience art and culture and that library staff will be trained to become 'confident Cultural Champions'.

A presentation on 'Public Libraries Culture Offer' given in February 2017 can be found on the ASCEL website and indicates the work undertaken so far. A survey of library services (58% response rate) showed that libraries were: hiring out space for cultural activities (94%), offering cultural activities at least monthly or quarterly (80%+) organised book-related talks or workshops monthly or quarterly (80%+), arts, film or music events yearly or more often (60%+). Around 40% were offering Fun Palaces. Around 80% had some form of cultural partnership with arts, museums, galleries or heritage sectors. 40% have cultural education partnerships in place, 34% have partnerships related to sport and 26% have economic partnerships with creative businesses. It seems to be suggested that this offer may have a core component (builds on what libraries already do) and a stretch offer for funded projects to reach new audiences and enables people to discover and create their own culture. (Presumably what libraries don't do so much of at the moment).

28.
Literature review: the impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment

The Reading Agency / BOP consulting, (2015)

In 2014, the Reading Agency received funding from the Peter Sowerby Foundation for a collaborative project to develop a robust reading outcomes framework. As a first step, BOP consulting was commissioned to create this literature review, although the overall ambition of the Reading Agency in this respect can be summarised as: "…to move beyond a programme-by-programme evaluation approach, to think more strategically about impact and to embed it throughout our work." Around 200 documents were retrieved for initial consideration, with 51 documents being fully reviewed, mostly published within the last 10 years.

This review focused on findings relating to non-literacy outcomes of reading for pleasure or reading for empowerment. Reading for pleasure and recreational reading are used interchangeably and are defined as "Non goal oriented transactions with texts as a way to spend time and for entertainment". Reading for empowerment is defined as "Transactions with texts as a means of self-cultivation and self-development beyond literacy". The review notes that the initial aim was to focus on the impact of reading programmes (presumably similar to the Summer Reading Challenge and others) though there were relatively few evaluations available to compare. The authors state that other large scale reviews exploring the role of reading for pleasure have focused on children and young people and the impact on academic attainment. (Department for Education 2012, National Endowment for the Arts, 2007, Clark and Rumbold, 2006). Five subgroups of literature were identified: 1. General adult populations, 2. Children and young people, 3. Parents and carers, 4. Adults with health needs, 5. Adults with additional needs. For AIF's purposes, we will focus on 2 and to a lesser degree 3. Each section has an individual overview and summary.

The impact of reading for pleasure among children and young people clearly links to attainment, but it is noted that these impacts seem to be greater when this comes from self-directed and autonomous activity. Interestingly, enjoyment of reading was seen even when the children involved did not consider themselves to be particularly good readers. (Smith et al., 2012) As with adult populations, social interactions, social and cultural capital can be impacted, as well as more personal-

scale impacts in imagination, focus, relaxation and mood regulation. Impact on parents and carers were more undocumented, however there are links to later education outcomes and improvements in parent-child communication.

While the sources were all of a generally high standard, the majority were cross-sectional, observing only a single population at a single point in time and that the populations involved were fairly specific (school class, clinical group) therefore the findings may not be generalisable to other populations. It is noted that 'reading for pleasure' was rarely the sole variable involved in studies, usually a factor combined with academic achievement or other leisure activities; therefore despite being at the heart of many of these investigations, there is little to unpack all the elements of the core phenomenon. The reading outcomes framework that was subsequently developed by the Reading Agency and BOP would go on to, somewhat, help address this.

This literature review is valuable as it shows the shape and wider direction of research around reading for pleasure in its widest sense. The majority of the documents reviewed are noted to be within the last 3 years (2012-2015), indicating a fairly rapid expansion of literature in this area.

Cultural Education: a summary of programmes and opportunities

This report gives a detailed overview of major national programmes and case studies of local / regional activities. This is structured around 6 'ambitions for world-class cultural education: Cultural opportunities for all pupils, Nurturing talent and targeting disadvantage, A high-quality curriculum and qualifications offer in arts subjects, Excellent teaching, Celebrating national culture and history, Creating a lasting network of partnerships to deliver our ambitions, now and for the future.

This report is mostly descriptive though by virtue of its own existence we can clearly see the increasing profile of Cultural Education and the need for a national overview; prompted by the earlier Henley review. Critics might suggest that this simply draws together a range of programmes that, largely, already existed and does little to move the debate forwards. On the other hand, this negates the potential value of mainstreaming a nationally agreed policy term for the central issue of "Cultural Education"; and how relatively unknown the concept was prior to the Henley review.

Focusing on libraries specifically, public libraries are mentioned under 'Cultural opportunities for all pupils. Local authorities invest £820 million in public libraries and £6 million is invested by ACE for arts-in-libraries funds. DFE, DCMS and ACE are all testing automatic library enrolment in 22 local authority areas. The book-gifting scheme through Booktrust is a noted as a key project supported since 2004 by DFE, although we can note a decision to withdraw all funding in 2010 was rapidly reversed after campaigning pressure. A 'Cultural Passport' service is described and was previously recommended in the Henley review, although little has surfaced about these trials since (Barking and Dagenham appears to be one local authority where this was trialled further). The Spark Festival and 2011 research report from De Montfort University is identified in a case study.

Appendix A also revisits Darren Henley's vision of cultural education, a framework for children at ages 7, 11, 16 and 18-19 years old, outlining 'minimum levels of expectation' for their cultural education. Worth noting briefly here are that (amongst various other experiences) a 7 year old "should have been given the opportunity to visit age appropriate events and venues such as a…library". An 11 year old will have, "Become a regular user of a library". By the time a child is 16 years old they will have "Continued to use a library to access a wide range of books, as well as for other research materials." And "Had the chance to lead or shape an activity in school by…helping in the school library".

The programmes detailed vary enormously in size, reach and cultural focus, seemingly out of necessity but perhaps this suggests an ambition to take a more unified and considered approach. Overall the report successfully covers a range of widely varying programmes although the main statements of political ambition and potential future direction can essentially be found in the foreword (Gove and Vaizey) and preface (Henley).

30.

Impact of arts education on the cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes of school-aged children

Education Endowment Foundation / Durham University, (2015)

This literature review was commissioned by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to assess the impact of arts education on children from pre-school to compulsory school age; ages 3 to 16. Arts education included a range of subjects including the traditional fine arts (visual art, music, dance, performing arts, theatre, dance) as well as modern dance, hip hop, poetry and creative writing.

A total of 199 studies were identified from eleven international educational, psychological and social science databases. The majority of studies either focused on music (71) or a combination of art forms (38), and most studies targeted primary school aged children (79). A typical reader would be suggested to only focus on the first 50 pages of the report, the rest of the lengthy document discusses each study in turn under relevant subheadings. The table on page 7 provides a useful summary, with further detail following this.

Although the review found "no convincing evidence that demonstrated a causal relationship between arts education and young people's academic and other wider outcomes.", it identifies a number of areas showing promise and a wealth of information to inform future investigations (particularly pages 11-12). In general, while positive impacts were reported in many studies, it is difficult to assign significance to these due to design flaws in the studies. For example, small, convenience sampling from one or limited locations, limited detail on the actual interventions used, comparing 'arts-heavy' schools with 'arts-light' schools without controlling for other variables, little replication of studies, teachers acting as the researchers, invalidated assessment instruments, self-reporting and anecdotal accounts.

As far as AIF is concerned, 'creative drama' appears as an activity with inconclusive evidence for pre-school and primary school aged children. (As compared to activities with potential, or those that are currently unpromising). Drama's effect on theory of mind (empathy) for pre-school is currently unpromising, as is drama on affective outcomes for primary school. However, the report still recommends that the integration of creative drama in the classroom could be piloted for children of all age groups, despite inconclusive evidence. Evidence for creative drama with preschool children shows potential in respect of reading outcomes, but this is based on 3 studies, all of which have small samples (<50 participants), some of which lack control groups or pre-post test comparisons. Creative drama with primary school children shows some promise on academic outcomes though not for non-cognitive outcomes. This is based on 5 studies, all of which have small samples (<50 participants), some of which did not randomly allocate participants and the interventions were mostly part of a wider instructional strategy. The impact of creative drama on non-cognitive skills for both primary and secondary school aged children had little evidence.

It is also worth noting that creative writing was a relatively rate topic (7 of the studies) and that these studies mostly focused on the writing itself as an outcome, not the impact on other learning outcomes.

31.
Theoretical models of learning and literacy development

Ortlieb, E / Emerald (2014)

This is the fourth of a series of books in 'Literacy Research, Practice and Evaluation' and addresses contemporary theories of literacy development, with the aim to help align new theories with current practices in schools. The theories in Part 1: New learning are discussed below, Part 2 & 3 are more advanced with perhaps a less immediate link to the approach of AIF.

Attraction Theory relates to 'affect' or emotional responses (positive or negative) to a learning environment. Teachers must continually 'attract' students focus, rather than assume they will be drawn to the subject. Learning and knowledge are more likely 'stick' if there is an emotional component around which lasting memories can form. Psychology will not give a complete picture though nor will Educational research, without an understanding of how the human brain works.

Spacing Theory posits that new information is not simply dropped into the folders of the mind, that the mind have the 'space' or be ready and anticipating this process. The pre-learning stages of Ready (preparative behaviours, understanding context), Set (understanding the specific/immediate challenge), Go (addressing the problem, acting) are discussed under the umbrella of cognitive apprenticeship (CA) with examples given in relation to the teaching of writing.

Backwards Sequencing Theory suggests that reading can benefit from a nonlinear approach: read, reverse read and reread. This allows readers to see 'the parts before the whole' and is suggested to help a readers sense of enquiry and reflectiveness. It suggests that while narrative texts are traditionally linear, their complexities and layers of meaning could mean mental efforts are focused on simply 'getting through' the text rather than comprehending any greater themes or meaning.

Read Fast, Read Slow Theory first states that it is well known that fluent readers are better comprehenders than non-fluent readers and that acquiring automaticity of reading is key to this. Recent studies in eye-movement research are discussed. 'RF/RS' is a strategy whereby a blueprint can be obtained by speed-reading which is then secured by a slower than normal reading of the text.

Experiential Learning Theory broadly suggests that a range of experiences in or outside the classroom could be said to improve an individual's ability to 'think, act and make critical decisions'. This theory is rooted in many other models of cycles of observation, experimentation and reflection. The prior knowledge of students outside the classroom could be better acknowledged (almost along the lines of 'work experience') and that the contribution of specific learning experiences (site visits, trips, special events) without the necessary critical examination may be 'nothing more than one-off activities devoid of real reflection, personal change or increased civic engagement'.

Even the few theories discussed above can provide a rich ground for understanding and developing the approach of AIF. The novelty of a library visit and the emotional resonance of a performance relate well to Attraction theory, while Spacing theory may help our understanding of the link to pre or post activity classes (albeit more indirectly). Backwards sequencing may have an insight to the flash-forward/flash-back nature of live performances and, where relevant, an associated text to read; RF/RS could be mapped to a 'watch it, now read it' approach. Experiential learning theory has a great deal to add to understanding the value of out of class learning, though it is understandably sceptical that this does not just happen without effort or that without appropriate follow-through, those benefits 'in the moment' may be unsuitable for, or generally fail to be, capitalised upon.

32.
Child well-being in rich countries: A comparative overview

UNICEF Office of Research, (2013)

UNICEF has produced a series of Innocenti Report Cards since 2000, each including a league table ranking of OECD countries, while the exact subject of each report varies from year to year. This report card (11) provides measures of material well-being, health and safety, education, behaviours and risks and housing and environment; including progress since 2000.

The UK is almost exactly in the middle of the rankings overall (16 of 29) but is comparably worse on Education (24th) and better on Housing and environment (10th). It is worth noting that the UK has risen to the mid-table from the bottom place (21 of 21) in 2000. The Netherlands is the highest ranked overall, with the majority of Nordic countries filling the other top places. The reality of making international comparisons often means a time-lag between data collection and reporting. In this case, the data used refers to 2009/10 at which point the 'turbulence' caused by global recession may not be suitably captured. (Subsequent UNICEF report cards have gone on to look at these topics and increasing inequality).This review will focus on Part One, and dot every measure will be reported, just those more relevant to AIF. (Part two covers childrens own reported well-being/life satisfaction and part three covers changes since 2000)

In dimension 1: Material well-being, the Child Deprivation Index uses a list of 14 items, (fresh fruit, regular leisure activities, an internet connection) and the index is made up of those respondents who lack access two or more of the items. The list includes a measure of "Books suitable for the child's age and knowledge level (not including schoolbooks)" and "Money to participate in school trips and events"[5] both of which have some relevance to AIF. The UK is 9th on this specific measure though it is not possible to examine either access to books or school trips in further detail here; furthermore we could argue that a link between 'access to' vs 'enthusiasm for' is probably not as straightforward to establish.

Dimension 3: education participation records the percentages of children who are enroled in preschool prior to compulsory education (UK is 8th) and those aged 15-19 who are in further education (UK is lowest, 29th). It is noted here that seven of the wealthiest OECD countries, UK included, fall into the bottom third of the table. On a measure of 'NEETs' those aged 15-19 Not in Education, Employment and Training, the UK is 24th. Education attainment by age 15 refers to the PISA tests (Programme for International Student Assessment) where the UK ranks 11th. Caution is recommended by the authors to consider these rankings in their wider context, for example, the 'Finland paradox' whereby Finland reports the lowest levels of preschool enrolment yet scores the highest for educational achievement by age 15.

The conclusions for part one acknowledge numerous areas where this level of investigation could be yet be extended and deepened into measures on 'quality of' rather than just 'quantity or access to'. Most available data on children's lives relates to older children and young teenagers, while the development of early years (presumably under 11s) are comparatively sparse. Canada and Australia are mentioned as two countries making new efforts in this area, both drawing from an 'Early Development Instrument' (EDI) developed in the 1990s.

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[5] See European Commission 2009 and 2014 EU-SILC Module on Material Deprivation (Secondary variables)

33.
The Natural Approach: Language acquisition in the Classroom

Krashen & Terrell, (1998)

Stephen Krashen's acquisition learning theory, Monitor Theory and 'The Natural Approach' have all been recognised as highly influential concepts for language teachers in recent history. This short text is predominantly focused on second language acquisition though there are some interesting touchstones for those interested in language education in general. The first chapter specifically gives a historic overview of language education, noting that many formalized modern American and European approaches to language teaching, have been inferior to earlier informal and communicative approaches. At its core, the Natural approach places communication at the centre of language acquisition, as opposed to language learning. Comprehension must precede production; listening or reading precedes speaking or writing abilities. Secondly that production is allowed to emerge by stages, from non-verbal communication, to single words, to phrases and finally more complex discourse. Thirdly that the syllabus should be structured around communicative goals (a trip you took, a visit to a restaurant). Finally a conducive atmosphere for acquisition is one in which students 'affective filters' are lowered; anxiety, self-consciousness, relation with other students and so on.

In general this theory and approach would seem to support the value of reading for pleasure and for being exposed to 'new' aspects of language or vocabulary (whether first or second) in an alternative, 'fun' environment. The follow up activities in schools generally involved ongoing discussions and written work that used elements and recollection of the performance to enhance the communicative environment that is identified as crucial for language acquisition.

34.
Teaching English to Children

Scott & Ytreberg, (2004)

This short book is a frequently republished (19th edition) practical guide for primary school teachers, broadly separated into 5-7 and 8-10 year olds. The first few chapters may be beneficial for artists or library staff who are expecting or attempting to carry out work with school groups. The first chapter breaks down what can be expected of young learners, particularly common misunderstandings and logical leaps. For example, with 5-7 year olds: understanding situations before understanding the language being used, using the physical world (hands, eyes and ears), where the lines of fact and fiction really lie, relatively self-centred but not strictly anti-social, difficulty in admitting something has gone wrong or that they do not know. With 8-10 year olds, more questioning, more certain of the world, able to work with others, using both the spoken and physical world to convey meaning. An example is given of children telling jokes. A 5 year old will laugh because everyone else is laughing. A 7 year old may be able to repeat a funny joke but principally through memorisation. 10-11 year olds will know the joke and be able to work out or understand the punch line from the situation.

Broad recommendations for language teaching are given as well as specific learning plans and tools. The broad recommendations emphasis the links between performance and language; being able to play with a language, trying new sounds and nonsense words. Younger learners especially require movement and variety (of activity, pace, voice, organisation). Arguably, the point underlying much of this is that we, as adults, should not forget to treat language 'as language' - recognising it as separate from physical reality. The communication of meaning relies heavily on context, cues, body language, previous knowledge; all of which are demanding and take children a considerable amount of time to learn.

35.

Access to education increasingly on the basis of parents' ability to pay

NASUWT, (Press release) 2017

The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) released headlines from a survey of nearly 4,000 parents and carers. The survey covered issues related to parents or carers direct financial contributions to schools and was widely reported in the media (www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-39601310). In summary, NASUWT argue that the increasing charges are related to budget shortages, new policies allowing schools to issue these sorts of charge and that in some cases this may amount to covert and unlawful selection. It is worth noting that at a similar time, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) threatened a judicial review over alleged selection beyond streaming via Multi Academy Trusts (www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-39589911). The NASUWT survey included the following headlines:

51% had a request for a financial contribution in order to enhance resources while 23% had a request due to budget constraints. The majority (61%) paid up to £50 a year in this way.

18% had been requested to make a regular financial contribution in the form of a direct debit and 13% were expected to make regular payments by other means such as cash or cheque.

5% said that the cost of equipment affected what subjects their child chose to study.

15% said they were unable to allow their child to participate in an educational trip or visit in the last year due to cost. 26% could not participate in non-curriculum trips (residential, foreign or end of term).

38% made a financial contribution to enable their child to participate in extra-curricular activities.

In general, the contributions expected of schools or individual families participating in AIF shows seems relatively affordable, compared to other costs. Some interviewees mentioned that the cost was much lower when compared to taking a school to a Christmas show, pantomime or another leisure activity like a theme park. Nevertheless, the situation around these voluntary contributions can at least be said to vary greatly from school to school and even a relatively small additional cost could be part of a much bigger total over a year.

NASUWT, press release: link
www.nasuwt.org.uk/article-listing/access-education-increasingly-parents-ability-pay.html

Evidencing Libraries Audience Reach

ACE/Audience Agency, (2017)

In early 2016, Arts Council England commissioned the Audience Agency to carry out explorative research and in mid-2017, this report was published. The principle aims were to describe library audiences relative to other sectors and to survey library authorities to establish what approaches they were already taking to understand their audiences. A minor point worth making at this stage is to highlight the shift to 'audiences' over other terms that describe library users (usually users or customers). We could further debate whether someone withdrawing a library book, using a computer or renting a DVD be accurately described as an audience members, suffice to say that this shift does indicate a subtly different way of viewing libraries and those that use them. (see page 50)

The research comprised three main elements. An e-survey covered 43 local authority library providers from across the country (map on p42), of various sizes, regions and urban/rural environments. This was followed up with telephone interviews with 10 of the survey respondents. A literature review covered around 20 items, with DCMS, ACE and Libraries Taskforce documents featuring heavily.

Headline findings were that the library users profiled in this study were largely representative of the general population and in some respects more so than the typical audience profile of other arts and culture audiences. The Audience Agency used their arts audiences segmentation model (and Mosaic) to compare the sample provided by participating library authorities, to that collected by the wide range of arts organisations, many of whom are funded by ACE. Without going through point by point, some aspects of particular relevance to AIF include:

- Women are more likely to be library users than men (the vast majority of AIF audience was female)

- 25-39 year olds were the largest group of library users (again, this was the general age range of AIF)

- Households with young children are more likely to use libraries

- 38% of the libraries profile came from the four lower engaged segments of the Audience Agency model, which compared to 18% of the profile for arts and cultural attendance.

The survey of library authorities investigated how they collect data on their audiences. The majority (83%) collect some kind of demographic data and date of birth (95%) information as part of their day-to-day operations. With regards to events, the majority (93%) collect some additional information, this is most commonly in the form of qualitative feedback, event ratings or satisfaction levels (60%). Some collect postcodes (40%) though very few (13%) collect demographic data from attendees. The main barriers to collecting data were given as limited time (74%), attender resistance (66%) and the lack of suitable infrastructure (68%) Concerns around the sharing of data afterwards included time (57%) and concerns over data protection (49%).

The report contains a considerable amount of further analysis and insight; too much to summarize here. The overall conclusions are that libraries serve a wide range of users and often struggle to articulate the roles they play towards a variety of local and national policies. It is interesting to see audience agency segmentation applied to this set of library authorities, though how relevant it would be to individual authorities, libraries or even individual events is not clear. Further development around benchmarking seems likely.

Taking Part focus on libraries: Statistical release

DCMS, (2016)

Taking part is the main evidence source of evidence produced by the Department for Culture Media and Sport, and has run continuously since 2005. Arts Council England, Historic England and Sport England are partner organisations. The survey takes place in randomly selected households, face to face and covers a wide range of topics (45 minutes is suggested as the typical duration). The sample size has varied in various years but is usually around or above 10,000 adult responses. Some longitudinal data is available where individuals have participated in the survey for 3 or more years. As the name suggests, this particular release focuses on libraries.

34% of adults had used a public library (at least once) in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. The vast majority were very or fairly satisfied with their experience (94%). Among adults whose library use had increased, encouraging a child to read was the main reason for this increase (20% of those using the library more often). Later in the report, (p7) it is shown that this also increases with the number of children in the household; 40% of those with one child, 50% of those with two children. The most common reasons given for those who were using libraries less were buying or getting book elsewhere (17%) or reading e-books instead (12%).

74% of all adults had been to the library when they were growing up; this was 82% among those who used the library in the last 12 months (69% among those who hadn't visited in the last 12 months). Taking part data is compared to data from CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy), and the general trend of decreasing library use is confirmed; library visits having fallen by 15% and active borrowers having fallen by 23% (Between 2010-2015). Despite this, the same figures still show some 7.5 million active borrowers and 224 million visits. (Down from 10 million borrowers and 264 million visits). A particular decrease in library use has been seen among 16-24 year olds, from 51% to 25% between 2005-2015. Further in the report (p8) it is noted that this age group is the most likely to use them for academic study (43% compared to 6% of those aged 25-44)

In terms of demographics, the following groups were more likely to have used libraries than:

- Woman than Men (38% to 29%)
- Black and minority ethnic groups than those from white ethnic groups (49% to 32%).
- Upper socio-economic groups that lower socio-economic groups (36% to 30%)
- Non-working adults than working adults (38% to 31%)

There was no particular difference in terms of long term illness or disability (33%) to those with no illness or disability (34%)

This report is a concise statistical bulletin and as such does not seek to draw any particular conclusions or put forth any suggestions. Those interested in finding out more detail (for their region or about a specific question) are recommended to consult the data directly through the DCMS online analysis tools:

www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey-data-analysis-tools

There is little that is specific to either schools or the arts but a useful background for either to understand some broad trends around public libraries.

38.
Evidence review of the economic contribution of libraries

ACE/BOP consulting, (2014)

In early 2014, Arts Council England commissioned BOP consulting to undertake a literature review on how public libraries and the services they offer contribute to the economy. There are three main hypothesis put forward for how libraries contribute to the economy:

- As economic actors in their own right (economic impact)
- As institutions that create economic value in the local area (place-based economic development)
- As organisations delivering a wide range of services, valued by users and non-users, set against the cost of providing these services (benefit-cost/total economic value)

While these hypotheses are put forward, the report does not aim to calculate relevant figures for any or all of these and in some respects cautions against the shortcomings of potentially doing so. Nevertheless, the report points to a variety of other studies (in the UK and US) that have done so; again, noting that these mostly focus on one or two of the theses above and that none sufficiently claim to assess the total economic value of public libraries. In the concluding paragraph of the executive summary, it is neatly summarised that:

"What the available evidence shows is that public libraries, first and foremost, contribute to long term processes of human capital formation, the maintenance of mental and physical wellbeing, social inclusivity and the cohesion of communities. This is the real economic contribution that public libraries make to the UK. The fact that these processes are long term, that the financial benefits arise downstream from libraries' activities, that libraries make only a contribution to what are multi-dimensional, complex processes of human and social development, suggests that attempting to derive a realistic and accurate overall monetary valuation for this is akin to the search for the holy grail. What it does show is that measuring libraries' short term economic impact provides only a very thin, diminished account of their true value."

The report details each hypothesis throughout the following sections, referencing a range of studies and other research that relates to each. The topics and contexts are too varied to summarise here, but there is a wealth of compelling information for anyone looking to make the argument for public libraries.

The conclusion re-iterates the gaps and challenges related to each hypothesis and hence to the overall issue of assessing the economic value of libraries. A useful summary table of the various themes and groups can be found on page 53; for AIF, it is useful to note that the literature related to Children and Young People under Reading Frequency, Literacy Skill and Employability is all rated as 'Promising' whereas most other themes are 'Emerging' or 'Limited'.

In summary, the report makes for a valuable alternative perspective on public libraries and points to a variety of areas in which future investigations could be carried out; compared to the same issues and topics in arts and cultural more widely. What are the future impacts or savings associated with increased sociability, community cohesion, mental health, educational and various other benefits that most believe cultural activity to have? At least from a top-level perspective, initiatives such as SCL's Universal Offers can be seen as a framework through which some of these issues could be better articulated.

39.

The Case for Cultural Learning: Key Research Findings

Cultural Learning Alliance, (2017)

This is a short document (9 pages) highlighting ten key research findings, as an update from the first five key findings which were published in 2011. The studies chosen are selected on the basis that they either were large cohort studies (typically 12,000+) or were studies that used control groups. Although there are ten headings, there are 31 studies referenced altogether, with most sources being UK or US in origin. The headlines are summarised here, though the individual studies behind these have not been reviewed, though some are known more widely than others. At the outset, the report states there are, of course, intrinsic reasons for studying 'the arts and heritage' but that this report focuses on the 'educational, employment and civic benefits' delivered by cultural learning.

For one thing it is telling that many of the examples relate to reading, libraries and literacy, although at the same time, these are topics that regularly emerge for primary age children and literature around 'core skills' education more generally. Some claims are found to broadly apply in both UK and international contexts (typically US). Many references are to the work of Dr James Catterall, who worked extensively with the Arts Education Partnership and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Culture and Sport Evidence programme (CASE) in the UK is also a key source used. Many of the reports, either deliberately or co-incidentally focus on low-income groups, and how arts education can have a particular impact here.

The range of individual topics covered is testament to the complexity of the arguments being made. Each claim is further summarised here, but readers are recommended to examine any particular studies further to see how they specifically apply to their area of work or interest.

1. Participation in structured arts activities can increase cognitive abilities by 17%

The Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) review in 2010, using the CAT (Cognitive ability test)

2. Learning attainment through arts and culture can improve attainment in Maths and English

A CASE literature review (2015) 'pointing to a positive relationship'

Young people using libraries read above the expected level (Clark and Hawkin, 2010)

US Cohort studies (of 25,000) showing arts activities increase maths and literacy attainment (Catterall, 2009 &2012)

3. Learning through arts and culture develops skills and behaviour that lead children to do better in school.

CASE review of 2010, structured arts activities lead to increases (of 10-17%) in transferable skills, including confidence and communication.

Control group studies for drama (Fleming et al, 2004) and visual arts (Catterall and Pepper, 2007) have shown increases in self-esteem and self-efficacy.

4. Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree.

Based on the British Cohort Study of 1970, the following all increased the odds of having a degree visiting a library, leisure writing at age 16, art and music related leisure, reading for pleasure, attending a night course. (Robson, 2003)

The NELS:88 cohort study (of 12,000) in the US found students who had 'intensive arts experiences' in high school were three times more likely to earn a bachelors degree (Catterall, 2012) (NELS: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988)

5. Employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment.

NESTA research suggests that many (87%) highly creative jobs are at low risk of automation, compared to 40% of the UK workforce as a whole (Bakshi et al, 2015) and that creative industry jobs now make up one in 11 jobs in the UK.

The Scottish School Leavers Database showed that, controlling for various factors, among young people leaving school at the first opportunity, those that had studied arts subjects had higher employability and stayed in employment longer (DTZ, 2006)

6. Students from low-income families who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer.

The NELS:88 survey found that 24% of those who had engaged in the arts at school were volunteering, compared to 11% of those who had not. (Catterall, 2009)

CASE literature review of 2015 found that 'Volunteering and caring are both developed by arts engagement'.

7. Students from low income families who engage in the arts at school are 20% more likely to vote as young adults.

Using the British Cohort Study of 1970, Robson found that the following at age 16 increased the odds of 'civic engagement' at age 29: Art and music related leisure, reading for pleasure and visiting a museum. (Robson, 2003)

The (slight) equivalent US study by Catterall showed that 'high arts' students were 20% more likely to have voted in any election, in the past 24 months at the time of interview (Catterall, 2009)

8. Young offenders who take part in arts activities are 18% less likely to re-offend

Re-offending rates for young people who took part in Summer Arts Colleges were 54% compared to a national rate of 72%. (Stephenson et al, 2014)

9. Children who take part in arts activities in the home during their early years are ahead in reading and maths at age nine.

UK cohort study Child of the New Century (of 19,000) found that children who participated more often in reading, writing, drawing and painting from ages 3-5 showed higher ability in reading and maths. (CNC, 2016)

The longitudinal study of Australian children (of 10,000 children and families) showed similar increases related to the frequency of home activities at the age of 2-3 to reading and numeracy scores at age 8-9. (Yu & Daraganova, 2015)

10. People who take part in the arts are 38% more likely to report good health

Evidence here comes from Scotland (Leadbetter & O'Connor, 2013), the Nordic countries (Konlaan, 2000), Italy (Grossi,2010 & 2012). Most arts activity is linked in some way to health and well being, to varying degrees, with Dance linking to physical health in particular.

40.
Arts Awards Impact Study, 2012-2016

Hollingworth. S et al (2016)

Arts Award is an increasingly widely known standard that many working in arts for children and young people are aware of.

Artsmark is a standard for entire schools, whereas Arts Awards relate to different qualification levels for pupils. Bronze, Silver and Gold are all recognised on the Regulated Qualifications Framework; roughly equivalent to GCSE G-D, GCSE C-A* and a B at AS Level respectively. Gold also carries 16 UCAS tariff points. Discover does not appear on either the RQF or UCAS Tariff. Explore is entry level and does appear on the RQF.

184,608 awards have been made since its launch in 2005 and is available to people up to the age of 25. The typical age for participants is 15 years old, with Gold being higher (18) and Bronze being lower (14). The majority of awards made in a given year were Bronze, until Discover and Explore level awards were introduced in 2012/13, with Discover now making up around half of the total awards in 2014/15.

This recent impact study combines longitudinal and in depth interviews with 68 pupils from 2012 to 2016,. Pupils were at various stages and potentially followed up to three years after the completion of their award. A range of supplementary qualitative and quantitative data was available from Arts Award settings, advisers and young people. Page 9 has a summary graphic of research approaches.

Short case studies of 14 different Arts Awards settings are given in Appendix 2 (note this is in a separate document) and helped form the overall research approach. The case study settings were predominately educational or within arts organisations, no libraries are noted.

The study discusses the fundamental issue of measuring the impact of the arts, in an educational context. A contextual diagram helps identify areas for investigation: Contextual factors, key mechanisms and outcomes. The 10 key mechanisms are addressed individually under section 2.4.

Library settings are referenced on page 20, comparing types of awards given with different settings. Libraries or archives seem to award a large number of Discover level awards, and no Silver or Gold awards. These are similar proportions to primary schools, likely indicated a similar age range of pupils being engaged.

This study helped articulate the impact of a relatively unconventional, but increasingly well known qualification, celebrating the pedagogic foundation of the award and numerous 'soft' benefits for students undertaking significant self-directed work. It was, perhaps unsurprisingly, found that those achieving the highest level of the award (Gold) alongside an established arts or cultural organisation were those who benefited the most in terms of future careers in the arts but there were many other significant 'soft' benefits noted throughout. The lower levels of awards, such as Bronze, could still have a valuable impact in themselves or encourage progression, though there was some concern as to the diminishing value this might when being delivered in larger cohorts.

41.
Cultural Education partnerships (England) Pilot study final report

NFER (2015)

The Cultural Education Partnership Group emerged in 2012 as a recommendation from the Henley review, and brings together representatives from Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, British Film Institute and English Heritage. NFER was commissioned to investigate three very different pilot Cultural Education Partnerships (CEPs) in Bristol, Barking & Dagenham and Great Yarmouth. It is noted these CEPs received no additional funding for partnership work. In the context of AIF, all regions have a CEP. Leicester(shire), 'The City Classroom', Ashfield and Mansfield (Nottinghamshire – Inspire), Nottingham – ChalleNGe Nottingham. Two of the partners of AIF are also key partners of their respective CEP's, in Leicester, The Spark, in Nottinghamshire, Inspire.

This report brings together interviews with partners in each of the CEPs, national partners and related cultural education data. The impact of pilot CEPs is summarised in Figure 1 / Page 7 and tends more towards organisational, or network level improvements rather than concrete data but this is understandable given the difficulty in establishing the impact of culture and the early stages of the groups.

The introduction gives a useful summary of ACE funded cultural education programmes over recent history; Creative Partnerships (2002-12), Find your talent (2007-10), the establishment of Bridge organisations (2010), the establishment of Music education hubs (2012) and the inclusion of museums and libraries in ACE's remit in 2013. The report then outlines principles of effective partnership working and from a range of studies summarises some common success factors; which in the context of AIF may also be applicable to the partnerships involved (summarised):

- Selecting the right partners – complementary organisations and senior buy in

- Achieving an effective structure for decision making

- Setting goals – that matter to organisations and the intended beneficiaries

- Trust and consensus – at an organisational and personal level

- Focus on practical achievements – although it will take time, not just a 'talking shop'

- Maintaining commitment – sustaining momentum, addressing changing needs

- Adequate resources – for activities but also for meetings and communications

- Being able to demonstrate impact – the difference to intended beneficiaries

As suggested, the three CEPs vary greatly so it is hard to pull out any particularly relevant and entirely context independent observations, other than simply recommending readers to investigate for themselves. Additionally, part of the reason these three were selected was due to being involved in a number of key programmes (Heritage Schools Programme, Museums and Schools Programme and others) that may or may not be relevant to other areas.

The ability for individual CEPs to be locally responsive, take ownership and decide measures of success for themselves was noted as a strong point, though it raises the question, as to what measures of accountability might be used in future. It is noted that the Henley review recommended that the CEPG might become the 'single, strategic commissioning fund for Cultural Education money in England' however by the production of this report, it is noted this recommendation would not be taken forward, presumably to remain locally responsive and flexible to the needs of various partners.

42.
Towards Cultural Democracy

Kings College London (2017)

One recommendation of The Warwick Commission led to the 'Get Creative' campaign led by the BBC. Alongside this, researchers from Kings College London conducted a 15 month research project which produced a number of internal reports and this public document. A range of interviews were conducted with the main steering group, 28 get creative champions, group conversations with 'What Next?' groups, two rounds of questionnaires all creative champions, four 'mini ethnographies' and five workshops with practitioners and academics.

A central argument for change in cultural policy is that policy to date in the UK has predominately taken a 'deficit approach' to arts and culture, arguably still underpinned by Matthew Arnold's view of culture as 'the best that has been thought and said'. Cultural democracy would emphasise the ability for individuals to choose, create or co-create their own culture, and is often concerned with cultural practises that are neither publicly funded nor commercially profitable; though there are implications for both public and private sectors besides. Put another way, the researchers argue:

"The prevailing model of 'access', and its language of 'barriers' and 'widening participation' is woefully inadequate in explaining how cultural creativity does or does not happen...the deficit model, which takes as its starting point the aim of increasing levels of engagement with arts organisations that have been deemed sufficiently 'excellent' to receive public money."

The authors clearly place the 'Capabilities approach' at the core of their argument, changing the focus to one around individual freedoms rather than institutionally defined deficits. Human functioning (beings and doings) differs from their capabilities (the opportunity to achieve those beings and doings. One example in the report relates to a network of break dancers, whose members use a variety of resources, council funded workshops, private tuition and open spaces in a shopping centre. Any one of these links could be removed and the network would be diminished, the ability to realise cultural capabilities would be damaged. This obviously chimes with the 'cultural ecology' approach of Holden. 14 policy recommendations are made, too much to cover here, but they cover existing institutions, arms-length bodies, government departments and cross department aims.

The report refers to Voluntary Arts, 64 Million Artists, Fun Palaces and of course came from Get Creative; unsurprisingly, it was well received by these organisations who are already working in 'everyday' culture or creativity. 64 Million Artists, for one, also produced a report commissioned by ACE called 'Everyday Creativity' touching on similar themes, from an academic-informed but not academic-led approach. At the time of writing, neither ACE or DCMS appear to have given an official response, but ACE at least appears to be already aware of the debate. The authors acknowledge they are not entirely sure what cultural democracy would look like if it happened tomorrow but that in increasingly divided times, it is worth questioning some long held tenets of western-style representative democracy such as the 'Arnoldian' view of culture.

Others were less positive. Several responses to a Guardian article by Stella Duffy (about the report and her own involvement with Fun Palaces) were collected by musicologist Ian Pace. Overall, a key criticism is that without some gatekeepers and some ideal of 'Arnoldian' culture, we would be left with the lowest common denominator; though some fear the role of market forces in this, others point to state populism. Many suggest that, left to both market forces and everyday creativity alone, there would be little room for critical and challenging art and that far from vanishing, gatekeepers would simply emerge from those who had become proficient in this new language.

One of the authors of the report, Dr Anna Bull, responded, with the main defence being that critical and aesthetic judgment continue to take place across subcultures outside of predominately white and middle class institutions, and in popular, every day and commercial culture besides. Simply doing more outreach is not the same as fundamentally rethinking what culture is valued most, by the most people. Both Pace and Bull broadly agree that the concept of 'community' should not necessarily be always viewed as a 'wholly benevolent or benign thing'. Both seem to

agree that class is an often unrecognised issue, Bull points to other research suggesting class is the biggest form of inequality in the arts, though Pace that a new class of gatekeeper would emerge, and on currently extremely vague territory compared to the existing system, which could of course stand to be improved. Further criticism came from Stephen Pritchard, Phd researcher, who points to earlier, and more radical ideas coming from the Cultural Policy Collective's report 'Beyond Social Inclusion Towards Cultural Democracy' (2004). Pritchard particularly focuses on the core 'capabilities approach', which remains essentially liberal and market driven: *"They want "creative citizens" with enhanced (i.e. liberal or neoliberal) "capabilities" that fit within a (slightly more democratic) modified status quo."* For Pritchard, the approach so far remains more in line with the 'democratisation of culture' over 'cultural democracy'.

Certainly the large initiatives and projects involved so far indicate a trend towards everyday creativity, though it is arguably too early to say how any major re-orientation towards these objectives would be experienced. Smaller scale and relatively easy to access funding is typically suggested as a pretty broad solution as is access to other tangible resources, usually spaces and equipment. There are currently 3 years until ACE's 10 year strategy concludes (2 years after this a general election is scheduled) so it will be interesting to see how ACE's goals change, if at all. Certainly with libraries and museums within its remit, ACE seems to have an increased responsibility over a range of everyday spaces though some could argue here that the park, shopping centre and school might be even more 'everyday' by comparison

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