



Rethinking Cultural Inclusion and Diversity Supporting Documents and Appendices Sept 2020



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MKIAC and Bletchley Park Digital Light Collaboration March 2020
Photo Credit: Karen Kodish

Cover photo: MKIAC and Bletchley Park Digital Light Collaboration March 2020 Photo Credit: Karen Kodish



'Bandish' by Pagrav Dance, World Picnic Day 2018 at MK Rose.
Photo credit: Pagrav Dance Company.



Focus Group Findings: Hearing the Voices within our Diverse Communities

The following section outlines the general perceptions of the arts and heritage sector of people from different communities, as relayed by participants during the 12 focus group sessions in Milton Keynes. Four main topics were covered in these sessions:

- cultural identity and meaning;
- feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector
- marketing in the local arts and heritage sector
- working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

Feedback from the focus group sessions provides clear insights into the major factors that influence each group when making decisions to connect and engage with local cultural activity as participants, audiences, volunteers and workers. They identify some new ways in which social integration and cultural inclusion can be addressed.

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Groupe Acrobatique de Tanger, at The Circus Hub in Middleton Hall.
MK International Festival 2018. Photo Credit: Shaun Armstrong



a. African and Caribbean Heritage

Cultural Identity and Meaning

Culture was identified by this group as a way of life that illustrates belonging and identity. It relates to place and people who live in a particular place, and can change according to both place and time. According to this group culture can include food, dance, speech, religion, music and dress, all ways in which ideas of identity are expressed. Generational differences were highlighted, as well as differences between those born in the UK of African and Caribbean parents and those who emigrated here. These differences are highlighted in changing perceptions of what is acceptable to say or do.

- *Belonging... and way of life*
- *It's a way of life which encompasses belief, way of thinking, even a way of acting... it's a value system*
- *A way or a manner of a group of people*
- *It's how you've been brought up and where you've been brought up*
- *When we look at Africa, obviously we've got the diversity of people, the diversity in food... there's also music, the type of music [other] people listen to, the way they dance to the music as well*
- *If you live in a mountainous place or you come from the riverside for example, you may find that your past is all about fishing, so your culture is you love fish, so generally that geographical location has dictated what your thoughts are*
- *I was born in the Caribbean so what I brought with me is totally different to what my kids have, because they have assimilated into a system here and they've taken just a little part of what it is to be Caribbean and they've taken the rest from being British and English*
- *I feel like it's upbringing... everything is different from the way we speak, even on the way here I said a word and my mum thought I was speaking like a gangster*
- *Your parents are different, the way they were brought up and your upbringing is different abroad and when we go on to have our own kids, their culture is going to be different from our culture*

Cultural activity was seen to be activity carried out by people in a particular way that is known to them in order to celebrate identity. It can include ceremonies and social events, and help people to integrate and belong. Until prompted to think of mainstream arts and heritage organisations, all activity referred to was from the point of view of African and Caribbean culture. Activity mentioned included choirs, churches, festivals and sports days specifically aimed at celebrating African and Caribbean communities. There was a view that more activities that promote integration should happen in Milton Keynes so that young people can feel a sense of belonging to this community.

- *It's a group of people that share the same way of living, the same way of understanding life as well, socially, doing the same traditions, meeting together doing some kind of activity*
- *Anything that involves celebrating who you are, your upbringing as well as promoting it, spreading it... [celebrating] what makes you a person, your heritage*



- *I think cultural activity depends on the presentation. It could be a specific ceremony for example, so many different cultures will be demonstrated in many different ways... the naming ceremony in the south of Ghana might be different from the north of Ghana*
- *Most Africans do their traditional weddings here [in the UK]. In the past, when it's traditional wedding time, they have to travel back home to do it, people have accepted that where you are is your home and those cultural activities could actually happen here... but the interpretation could be slightly altered as well*
- *African Diaspora Day [in] Campbell Park... you play your music, you're dancing, you're feeling it, enjoying it, so you're feeling that it's something in you that can't change*
- *We need more of African celebratory integration when it comes to the next generation... Most schools will do an African Day where you bring in African food, you dress African*
- *If we [encourage inclusivity] it will help because it will give the kids a sense of belonging and once they get that sense of belonging I don't know if the gang will take our kids*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

Although participants had heard of the arts and heritage organisations that were named (venues that are members of AHA-MK) they highlighted that some of these venues did not promote a sense of belonging for them because they did not represent their cultural interests. It depends how relatable the programme is and what the community will gain from attending. Events with food attract African and Caribbean communities, and participants stated that they would attend talks that interest them. If events in the sector are co-created with this community they will be more likely to feel welcome and attend. One young person said that modern culture for young people born in the UK does not need to express African culture so strongly. Children's activities were reasons for older people to go to venues like the theatre and the gallery because it was something to do that their children might enjoy. Some people's children had experience of the arts and heritage organisations through school only, and the costs of events was something to consider. The more expensive the event the more exclusionary it becomes, and associated with 'upper' or 'higher' class tastes.

- *When you say about those kinds of cultural buildings, the Gallery, the fantastic building that is in the city centre... a lot of people don't feel like that building is there to enrich their culture so there is a gap between the communities and that building*
- *Does the [African and Caribbean community] have time to want to go [to the arts and heritage organisations]? And if they go there what are they going to gain? So it depends what you're putting on there*
- *If one doesn't feel assimilated with the culture it represents, you're not going to make great use of it, are you?*
- *I went [to MK Theatre] because I could relate to the play, but since then it's been your usual Pantomime, Aladdin, all that stuff, which the kids can go to, but for me... I want to see more ethnic things. Milton Keynes Theatre, Milton Keynes Gallery, if they can incorporate the number of nationalities that live in Milton Keynes in some of these events, we'll be there*
- *I want to see different faces... if there is a German beer and sausage festival I want to see people from all sides of Milton Keynes and all parts of the world*



- *You really need to get people involved if you're showcasing something, like a workshop, and they talk about their culture and they exchange whatever experience they have*
- *If you were going to approach someone my age (25) to put on a culture event, we don't need to be reminded that we're Nigerian... even though it's important and we love that, I feel that most activities geared towards Africans need to prove [that they're] African*
- *People here are being driven to do things for their children, they attend activities which they would never have attended [unless] their child is involved*
- *I went to the gallery with my kids, I want them to have knowledge*
- *I went to Bletchley Park for a masterclass... mathematics, for my daughter really... we found out through school*
- *I know people who have been 20 years in Milton Keynes and have never been [to Bletchley Park], 90% of them, apart from the young people who were taken by their schools, that's the only time they get a chance*
- *We have to consider [the average salary of] ethnic minorities within Milton Keynes. If my disposable income is £30 then I'm paying £15 [for arts and heritage events]. I wouldn't necessarily [become involved with] what you may deem upper class or higher class [tastes]*

Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

The marketing message was recognised as an important aspect of feeling welcomed and being made aware about activity in the arts and heritage sector. Traditional channels of marketing were mentioned such as the back of bus tickets, flyers and leaflets, Trip Advisor, EventBrite. However, when there is a lot of information presented in one area (such as leaflet stands) knowing what one is looking for and being encouraged or motivated to look for it was also cited; that is important in making decisions to be attracted to advertising for a particular place or event. Being invited to attend particular events was a way of encouraging attendance, and word of mouth is important, but in general the events and activities in the arts and heritage sector are not mentioned amongst the older generations. Community ambassadors were seen as a way in which the word can be spread. The younger generations are more likely to access information online. Churches and mosques were mentioned as places to advertise because the African and Caribbean communities frequent them, and websites such as African Diaspora and Friends of the Caribbean were also mentioned as ways to connect.

- *If [organisations] can get the advertisement part of it [right], that knowledge, people will be interested in seeing [what is going on]... if it was advertised properly people would think, oh maybe it's not only for the white*
- *If you're selling something to someone the person will want to know the content: what is the content, how beneficial is it, how much?*
- *If you ask me to go and see an orchestra that I don't even know or understand, for £50, because if it's not the kind of music that [I like], because not everyone will understand classical music, [then I won't want to go]*
- *Those little leaflets in the library and Tesco have [some information], but if you're shopping you might not really be looking*
- *The Commonwealth Day... we get invitations, the Mayor's Service and all the carol services, we get those invitations and we do attend*
- *The young ones want to be part of the digital world... advertising to an older person who is 50/60 is more likely to sit down and read MK Citizen, whereas a younger person may have it on an app*



- *You need a person in the community, that's what's missing*
- *I think it will be better if the arts and heritage group [work] really closely with the community leaders, in that way they'll be connected to those community leaders that have followers... to take their community there*
- *I run music events [at MK Gallery that are] extremely inclusive, extremely diverse, [but] one of our main issues is probably advertising, because there isn't a lot, there isn't a single space where people can come in and find out what's going on*
- *If there's a Mosque or a Pentecostal Church, where do we go on Sunday? Where do we go as a community? If we're saying we're not aware that these things exist, then maybe they can be available as literature in the places we go*
- *Can I just suggest that the jobs be advertised in a space that we occupy? So if a job comes up within an organisation, it could be advertised on the Friends of the Caribbean or the African Diaspora site*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

When discussing working and volunteering in the arts and heritage sector, comparative pay-scales were brought up as issues for parents encouraging their children to choose careers. There was some disagreement with this from a young person of Nigerian descent who is working in the arts, who has found her parents to be supportive. Also, representation would encourage people to move towards a career in the arts, but this representation was not obvious to participants. Furthermore, the specific roles available in the sector were not clear to this group. Answers such as 'project manager', 'accountant', 'event manager', 'entertainer', and 'sales' were given. It was important to the group that roles awarded were not tokenistic, as this would lead to a lot of pressure for that person to be the community representative.

- *Obviously our children are our main thing right now and we're thinking about how can we get our children into art when there's the option of science... do I want my child to do a BA in photography or do I want my child to do a PhD or whatever to be a doctor?... [the parents] are trying to steer them to what we feel is [well paid].*
- *I'm 25, my parents have always been supportive of my creative endeavours*
- *As long as [my children] have something to fall back on*
- *My daughter plays violin, she's grade 8, she plays piano and sings to diploma level... and what does she actually do?... A banker. And what is her attitude? Well that will pay the mortgage in the day time and music is for the night*
- *I always looked at music and stuff as a lifestyle choice, I wanted my life to be interesting... I'm a young person and I care more about going out to the parties and meeting people, more than getting a mortgage*
- *To grow in the arts and music [in Milton Keynes is almost impossible]. They have millions of office buildings but they don't have spaces for other enterprises, which I think is a major problem and if you don't see representation you're not going to think you can do that*
- *We want to experience it, want to know what's happening... then I'll be able to explain to my other people this is how it goes... people have their ideas [thinking] oh I won't be able to do it, but once they see oh my sister is there, they'll be like how did you do that?*
- *It would be unfair if you expect those people that you employ [from diverse communities] to get you to the communities. That's not their task. You have to have them there for certain tasks to do with art and the culture*



Conclusion

From the answers provided in the African and Caribbean focus groups, it is clear that a sense of belonging and shared identity are important when participating in culture and cultural activity. If there is no sense of belonging to a particular organisation or sector, then the community will not contribute or take part. For a sense of belonging to begin to be fostered, programmes and events must be relatable and of interest. Cost was stated as one of the barriers to participation, while food is a good way to bring this community together, and inviting people to be part of the creation and set up of tasks and events provides a sense of ownership.

Integration with British culture is seen to be important by this community, especially for the younger generation, so there is a tendency to attend events and programmes in the arts and heritage sector aimed at children, but little is sought out by adults for themselves. While there is a worry that young people of African and Caribbean descent won't belong to British culture, it is recognised that there are generational cultural differences. Young people in these focus groups who have grown up in the UK have different perceptions of their heritage, and approach dress, language and careers in alternative ways to their parents and grandparents. There was disagreement amongst generations about the suitability of a career in the arts and heritage sector. However, across generations there was a sense that people who work in the sector do not represent African and Caribbean communities, and this is a psychological barrier to thinking that jobs there were available to them. Indeed, there was little knowledge of what various jobs in the sector actually involve. This demonstrates the lack of experience and interaction these communities have had with the sector, either through education, friends and family working there, or getting to know an organisation as an interested and committed audience member. In order to become an integral part of the sector, this community needs to feel invited and welcomed. The culture sector must go on a journey of relationship building through community ambassadors, and engage with communities in spaces that they frequent and feel comfortable in.



Milton Keynes Hindu Association (MKHA) celebrating the 1st Anniversary of the inauguration of the MKHA Mandir and Community Centre, 14 January 2020

b. Asian Heritage

Cultural identity and meaning

Participants in this group aligned the meaning of culture with identity, behaviour and values. Culture is seen as a way of life. It is associated with traditions and beliefs, something that is a divider as well as a unifier. Culture can grow in new and different ways, and relates to everything that is done. The immigrant culture in Milton Keynes was mentioned as being unique as it creates a new cultural identity.

- *[Culture is] behaviours, the traditions you grew up with in your society or your neighbourhood... [it] identifies you with the habits you have*
- *[Culture is] the best way to know about any country, any place, to understand the values... if you know the culture you know where they're coming from*
- *It's about my heritage and some of the things I have learned from my parents*
- *The way you live, the way you eat, it's all part of culture, the way you bring up your children*
- *Culture is a divider and a unifier... it can be a uniqueness that separates you from someone else but that could also be a boundary that you cross in order to embrace somebody as well... it divides even families, the older generation from the younger generation*
- *Everything you do creates its own culture... Being in Milton Keynes there is something so fresh, so young about the city itself... everybody that moves here moves from somewhere else, it could be from down the road or it could be from another country and people have combined here and Milton Keynes has its own culture in itself*

Cultural activity was identified by participants as gatherings, community events, religious activities, activity related to various art forms, food, dress and language. It is social activity that brings groups of friends together to celebrate values and identity. Sharing and celebrating values and identity through cultural activity with other groups was mentioned as being an important part of expression and integration.

- *Language teaching events... open days as well where a centre that is specific to one community opens its doors and says come in*
- *It's a community... something where everyone comes together*
- *I would relate it to various art forms, because it should be something visual, anything sensory really, any kind of food, maybe food festivals, art festivals, music festivals*
- *Culture includes dress as well*
- *Ramadan, I think we have 11 mosque events taking place all through Ramadan and they're all very different to each other*
- *It's about my friends being there*
- *It's an expression of common values and purpose*
- *It's everyone trying to bring out something and relate to something and be more exposed and be engaging and incorporating themselves within the community*
- *Bringing in that patriotism and nationalism and the importance of displaying your culture to local people... you want people to come and celebrate [with you]*



Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

Some participants had attended various arts and heritage venues or knew of them, but some had not and most did not frequent them regularly. Participants felt that being culturally represented is an important aspect of helping them to feel welcomed by the sector. Programming for diverse local communities gives them a reason to attend different venues and events, as there was a perception amongst the group that the organisations in the sector are ‘not for them’. Involving people in the creation and set up of an event can help with participation. Being invited to participate would break down barriers for this group and it would suggest that the sector genuinely welcomes the community into its activity. Getting involved as a group would help some participants to cross previously avoided thresholds, as going in alone was off-putting. Going to events for children was another reason to visit organisations. Cost was mentioned as a reason for not attending events in the sector.

- *I’ve lived in Milton Keynes for 20 years... I’ve never been to the gallery. I might have been to the Stables once, but I wasn’t exposed to any of these events or cultural organisations... There was no reason for me to go, do you know what I mean? There’s nothing for me to sort of go, oh I’d go there. The only one was the Stables which had a sitar player a few months ago*
- *[The sector is] not offering something for [diverse] communities, they’re just keeping away from it*
- *I’m the only Chinese calligrapher at [Westbury Arts Centre]. It’s very sad that the local gallery doesn’t exhibit the local community’s artists*
- *The art [MK Gallery] brings to the city is valuable but it doesn’t reflect the society... there is an opportunity to develop further diversity*
- *If it was art based on India or the Middle East it might be interesting... but apart from that I just think these aren’t places for me to go*
- *[Milton Keynes Museum is] thinking more inclusively because they are doing things about the current people... The theatre, the gallery, they are typical English stuff, not that there is anything wrong with that but you need variety*
- *[Art in the Park does] has a parade of colours where everyone gets represented... [It] invites young people and they actually get to put on stalls and do something*
- *You feel you need to at least be invited to participate*
- *I feel as if it’s not being reached out, they may have websites and social media and everything but I still feel [I’m not being reached out to]*
- *If someone from my community is going I’d want to go as well, whereas I probably wouldn’t take just myself there because I’d feel kind of alienated and like I don’t know anyone there, so it’s a fear that we have, not being immersed in our own culture*
- *I was taking my grandchildren to the art gallery when they were little*
- *I’ve been to MK Theatre, but it’s expensive. Can we have a discount!?*
- *The MK Museum was slightly expensive, £7*

Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

Connecting with people throughout the community was identified by this group as a key component to advertising. It is not realistic to expect people to ‘just show up’, targeted marketing must happen. Offering diverse communities something that is of particular interest to them is how to inspire intentional and sustainable interest, and word of mouth is a powerful channel. Participants felt that when momentum has been built with a

community through a particular event, it is important to preserve this through ongoing marketing. It was also asked that a central hub for information about activity in the arts and heritage sector be created.

- *The moment you invite the MP and invite the Mayor [to Asian events] you think you’ve invited the first men of Milton Keynes, you think you’ve invited everyone, but you don’t actually have that connectivity and that communications. I think connectivity is the issue here*
- *I don’t know how many people can find out about what happens [in the arts and heritage sector]*
- *You need to be advertised to, it can’t just be it’s happening, show up*
- *[Advertise] at the Dosti Club and at our temple we have a similar club for the elderly*
- *It could be through events related to the community, bringing them into those places first and then after that they’re there... out of the 18,000 Indians in Milton Keynes, if we can take half of them there, at least 10% will start looking at what is happening next week*
- *[MKIAC] does an amazing job of going to every single mosque every Friday, talking to people and making sure they know that this is the Eid festival that’s being held for them*
- *A person needs to feel there is something offered [for them]... something to say come here... you go by word of mouth*
- *It’s word of mouth with the older generation... the younger people are not going to bring it up in conversation, oh did you hear about what the gallery is doing... it needs to be on their device*
- *After events happen, [communication with diverse communities] just dies down completely... give us something, a teaser to let us know you’re working on something in the future. Don’t just let it die down and let the momentum die... because the unfollow button is very easy to do*
- *[Communication with MKIAC] does not die down because that relationship is always there and it just makes you feel important, that you come and you’re invited*
- *Why isn’t there a central information hub where I can go and see what you’re doing?*
- *Milton Keynes has so many great things happening but still we’re not connecting the dots*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

One of the focus group participants (retired) volunteers with MK Gallery, and many said they would consider volunteering in the sector. It was perceived that 95% of those who work in the sector are white. Feelings of alienation were brought up on entering venues because of the lack of diversity and representation seen in the sector. Concern was expressed about how many people from diverse communities have the right experience for jobs in the sector. Work placements and work experience were suggested as ways in which skills can be obtained, as were leadership programmes for people who are Black, Asian and ethnically diverse. Role models are seen by the group to influence the decisions made by young people in terms of jobs and careers. Opportunities for children and young people were seen by the group to be the heart of a diverse workforce of the future.

- *When you actually walk into some of these places, you feel alienated in some ways... when you actually say is this my place? Do I belong to this? Or rather I’ll go out with my friends and other things*



- *I know you've been trying so hard to get the people employed in the Parks Trust, the Community Foundation... but how many of us have experience to apply for the job?... What kind of chance do the minorities have?*
- *Work placements, shadowing somebody. Lots of people are looking for work, they don't know where to start, it's always a vicious circle, how would you be qualified to work somewhere if you haven't experienced it?*
- *[MKIAC] has a year-long [volunteering programme] that fits around the school activities... [it is] constantly reviewing its training... MKIAC wanted to have a BME leadership programme to teach in inter leadership positions*
- *Role models [show] children and young people [that] there are career opportunities in arts and heritage organisations and they feel like they can aspire to it. Otherwise they might see it and say maybe that's not for me*
- *Young people are basically the ambassadors, they're the future... where the heart is*
- *We should encourage schools... to reach out to [arts and heritage organisations] to come and do assemblies or a special assembly [about roles in the sector]... it will create curiosity*

Conclusion

For this group, culture is seen to be a way of life, upholding identities and beliefs. Stating that it is both divider and a unifier demonstrates the acknowledgment of differences between communities. However, this group expressed a desire to share expressions of their identity so that they can be incorporated into the Milton Keynes community. To understand a culture, is to understand the people belonging to the community that practices that culture, and understanding is a key aspect of inclusivity. The group mentioned the culture of Milton Keynes as being new and fresh, which was positive as everyone is an immigrant.

Cultural activity is defined by this group as a way to bring people together. The arts and heritage organisations are well placed to do this, and become hubs for local community activity, but as this group vehemently stated, the programme and workforce must be representative in order to feel the sector is welcoming to all. Indeed, this group questioned whether the sector is for them. Being invited to participate was seen as a way in which this group would attend arts and heritage events and venues, and coming as a group with friends would help ease fears or apprehension. There are so many opportunities for the arts and heritage sector to create offers for groups, and this group would like cost effective ways to attend venues and events. Making connections with communities in order to invite them personally takes time, and as this group stated, community ambassadors only go so far. It is important to go to the places that this community frequents and build long-lasting relationships. Marketing should be targeted as some participants did not know how to find out about what goes on in the sector, and once connections are made efforts to keep relationships going should be sustained. While there was a willingness in this group to volunteer in the sector, it was perceived that workers are mostly white, which again challenges the confidence of thinking that they are welcomed by, or could belong to, the sector. Children's programmes and events are a point of access for this group, and they would like to see more communication between arts and heritage organisations and their children, informing them about the requirements of jobs, opportunities for work placements, and even the development of BAME leadership programmes.



b. White European
(not born in Britain)

Cultural identity and meaning

As with the previous two groups in this section, participants in this group associated the term culture with traditions, behaviours and beliefs. It is also seen as a way to unify people. Emphasis was put by this group on culture being related to the arts, and the idea of a 'cultured person' was brought up.

- *[Culture] reminds me of my roots, about community, about unity, about variety... a lot of people coming together sharing their roots*
- *Culture means certain traditions; routines people have within their community... perhaps rules as well*
- *Religion also influences cultures, the traditions in the way we celebrate Easter, Christmas*
- *It also means access to arts... music, theatre, galleries*
- *Somebody who is cultured in Germany is somebody who goes to the theatre, who reads books, who likes good discussion... it's nothing to do with being rich or poor, in Britain it seems to be to do with whether you are rich or poor*

Cultural activity was seen by this group as something that brings people together, and mostly relates to music, sports, dancing and galleries. There was a desire expressed for more cultural activities in Milton Keynes that would bring people together, as some participants have found it difficult to make friends in the city. Low cost activities such as talks, quizzes, sing-songs, cards, political debates were suggested. Cultural activity such as opera and the theatre were thought of as expensive by the group.

- *[Cultural activity] is to go out and to a place where you meet your friends, where you sing together... or you'd go and play cards together, or you would have a political debate*
- *People say Milton Keynes is a city of ghosts because people don't get together and socialise.. we've been living here for three and a half years and still most of our friends are in London... we would love to make like-minded friends in Milton Keynes*
- *Living here 35 years, Milton Keynes is a place which is very hard to meet new people*
- *In Germany there are operas in every small city, in every town almost, opera houses and they get subsidised. Here, to go to the opera costs a fortune, unless there are a few seats for the poorer, and so opera is seen as something exclusive*
- *With the theatre even now tickets are expensive... If you've got two or three children you're talking a lot of money*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

While participants could name quite a few arts and heritage organisations, they felt that they would be more likely to attend if there were opportunities to socialise and meet people there. Efforts made by the arts and heritage sector to encourage socialising with others and make friends and facilitate community gatherings were seen as activities that would help them feel welcomed and part of the organisation's offering. Participants wanted the sector



to offer them something different to a heavy-drinking culture. They wanted arts venues to be social places to hang out and become informed about arts in a casual way, and thought this was specifically important for students and young people. The group mentioned that for people who don't have children, after the age of 25 it is difficult to meet others in Milton Keynes. Participants did not see their ethnicity as a barrier to feeling welcomed by the sector and it would not stop them from taking part.

- *All the places we named, [these are] the places to go to spend some time but you don't meet anyone. When you go to the art gallery, you look at something but you don't meet people*
- *I would like to attend a talk with somewhere to go afterwards*
- *If [MK Gallery had] late nights and there was a nice bar at the end [I would be encouraged to attend]*
- *In my city... they refurbished a space, a bar which has coffee during the day and you can order drinks during the evening, but every day they have all these young artists presenting... this grew and in two years it is the most popular place in the city*
- *For people who don't have children there needs to be an encouragement to mix when you're past the age of 25*
- *[When I go to arts and heritage organisations] nobody asks me where I'm from, nobody really cares*
- *I mean [my ethnicity is] not something that's advertised: 'hello, I'm from...*

Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

Participants said that they specifically look for activities for children through traditional marketing channels, and sometimes hear about other activities through friends, but otherwise feel ill-informed about what goes on in the local arts and heritage sector. Advertising by the sector does not come to them, they have to look for it. Methods used by other cities were seen to be more effective than what happens locally. It was mentioned that internet searches for things to do in Milton Keynes do not show much. A centralised website or an app was mentioned as ways in which this group would like to be informed of activity in the sector.

- *I look for something specifically to do with my children... I [read adverts] because I'm looking for something to do with them*
- *[I hear about things] through friends, through word of mouth*
- *[In Milton Keynes] You really have to make the initiative and effort for the time, it doesn't come to you*
- *For example, I'm sure there is much more happening with the Stables... I knew [The Stables] was a venue, but I didn't know so much was happening*
- *[Milton Keynes Theatre had] a nice bar downstairs with a piano... but nobody really knew that because Milton Keynes Theatre doesn't really advertise*
- *[Where we park in Cambridge is] plastered with posters on all the things that are going on, so immediately you know, oh my God this is going on, that's going on... even coming out of the train [in Milton Keynes] there's nothing. You don't see posters*
- *I get inspired by the underground [posters]... it's like a reminder, like I wasn't really looking for this online but I saw the poster on the underground*
- *Sometimes I literally just Google what's on in Milton Keynes, but there's not a good website, some are out of date or it's irrelevant*
- *[I would like] one central [website] where all the arts things would be*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

Participants in this group could name various roles that exist in the arts and heritage sector. They said that they would volunteer if they had the time, but some found it difficult to discover volunteering opportunities in the sector. Pay scales were stated as reasons why participants in this group would not apply for jobs in the arts and heritage sector. If their children were interested in a career in the sector they would encourage them to pursue it, and it was stated that parents' involvement can encourage children's interest in the field. Participants find out about jobs through job boards and websites.

- *I was off sick for a while and I was actually thinking of volunteering [but] even googling places to volunteer [was difficult]*
- *I would volunteer [but I wouldn't work there]... I prefer [better paid jobs] than the art gallery*
- *If my children have an interest I would [encourage them to work in the arts and heritage sector]*
- *If parents get involved then kids get interested in something or do something. If they have no opportunity to go then of course nothing is going to inspire them to be that kind of person*
- *I use job boards which are related to my field... LinkedIn is the key one now... you see what other roles, what other businesses the companies represent... career trends*

Conclusion

With this group, culture was related to aspects of identity and behaviour, with specific Western traditions such as Christmas mentioned. Here the conversation about cultural activity related more to arts and heritage practice than the other two groups in this section/ The idea of a 'cultured person' was brought up in relation to having sophisticated knowledge about the arts. Concerns with being welcomed by the arts and heritage sector did not relate to visually recognisable cultural identity and ethnicity, but had more to do with the lack of friendly, chatty atmospheres and opportunities to make friends. Most participants had attended arts and heritage organisations, but wanted these organisations to provide new ways to socialise with friends in Milton Keynes, and offer ways for the community to come together, as alternatives to nightclubs and bars. This group felt ill-informed about what goes on in the arts and heritage sector, and wanted more direct, targeted marketing, as this would encourage them to attend. While pay scales were mentioned as a reason that some participants in this group would not like a job in the arts and heritage sector, the group said it would encourage their children to do so if the interest was there. Generally, the group felt the arts and heritage sector was accessible, but because of the lack of strong social links to it, it did not necessarily feel as if it belonged.



d. Disability

Cultural identity and meaning

Participants in this group see culture as beliefs and behaviours that are rooted in family and tradition. Time and place changes cultural identities. Education and experience can help people access culture. One participant, who is an artist, mentioned that the artists add to and expand the culture of the town/area where they work. The individuality of the Milton Keynes culture as a town of immigrants was highlighted.

- *A set of beliefs and behaviours that a certain group of people adhere to*
- *I see culture as your surroundings and how things within your surroundings influence who you are*
- *Traits shared across a community and across a place*
- *It can be something you're raised in, but it can also be, for example, if you moved to another country and picked up habits from there that would be taking on the culture of that place*
- *[Access to culture is about] education... people do lead blinkered lives and then they'll step into an art gallery or they'll go to the theatre and their lives will open up*
- *As artists we're expanding the culture and adding to the culture of where we are*
- *The mind-set of Milton Keynes has almost created its own culture. The people who came to Milton Keynes came at a time when it was all red balloons and people looking for a better life*

Cultural activity is seen by this group to relate to what people do to experience culture. Festivals relating to ethnicity and identity are celebrations. Sport and art were also examples of cultural activity given by this group. Sport in particular was seen as providing a sense of belonging to those that take part. Activities such as watching television are less socially interactive and celebratory, but can often be the only option for people with disabilities. The changing nature of the arts scene in Milton Keynes over time was commented on.

- *If somebody says to me [an event is] a cultural thing, you're expecting it to be lots of people from lots of different ethnicities*
- *There's many different types of festivals [in Milton Keynes]... It's a celebration of everything and allows people to dip in and experience them*
- *[Apart from these festivals Milton Keynes is] a grey culture, most of it's dominated by TV. TV dominates everything*
- *When you think of the MK Dons you think actually yeah... their being here has created a bit of culture in terms of football*
- *Football's cultural because it's tribal... it offers a sense of belonging*
- *We came here in '76 from the north because there were jobs and houses... there were a lot more art resources around. There were three different arts centres in Milton Keynes, there was Inter-Action... the gallery was much more localised*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

Participants could name many arts and heritage organisations in Milton Keynes. Of particular concern to this group was the amount of time it takes people with disabilities to take part

in activities, and this is not always acknowledged by the sector. Relaxed performances at MK Theatre were appreciated, but it was perceived that these shows are mostly for children, rather than adults. Physically accessible venues and clear information about accessibility on websites was cited as very important to feeling welcomed. Sensory tours at MK Gallery aimed at people with disabilities were enjoyable, and involvement in the set up encouraged ownership. Participants spoke about the need for a companion to accompany them to venues, and transport is also a problem as it is not always accessible. If disabled people are to be included by the sector, then they need to be able to reach the venues and events. Representation and being given the opportunity to join in would encourage people in this group to feel welcomed in the sector. Price was raised as an issue as some disabled people rely on benefits.

- *We take longer to do our work... I have problems filling out forms [because] I have to cope around my disabilities... other artists can quickly rattle stuff off, we need more time*
- *I work with a theatre group [with special needs]... we don't hear about [opportunities to present work early enough]... it's going to take other groups six months, it's going to take us a year*
- *The first time I ever heard about Relaxed Performances – it's a special performance of a show that is specially designed for people with disabilities - was at MK Theatre... It's been growing in recent years but it's going in a direction that it's all shows aimed at children, which is kind of bad*
- *We went to MK Gallery... we were doing a sensory tour, we set it up... it was good*
- *If it's somewhere much more accessible I'm much more likely to go to it... It's knowing that it's accessible before I go without ringing up. Some people seem to think disabled people have an infinite amount of time, we don't, so it's really nice when a venue's website is really clear about how accessible it is and it's clearly signposted, so I don't have to go round the back to get in, that makes a big difference*
- *She has problems finding people to escort her... She's quite isolated, she relies on a few church friends but they can't be as committed as she needs them to be... There are so many people like her who are voiceless*
- *I like to go with a friend or SNAP... you've got good company*
- *[Taxis] are not wide enough... they can't accommodate some of the walkers or the wheelchairs*
- *If you're non-verbal, [taxis] take you somewhere, but if someone's not in they're not going to stop and phone people... [Community transport] can make those connections to make it more accessible*
- *I have dyspraxia and I find getting to places a real problem... I find buses difficult because of my organisational problems*
- *If I'd had to depend on taxis I wouldn't be here [at this focus group]... If we're going to be included we have to be there*
- *If [my friend from MK SNAP] was onstage that [would encourage me] to attend*
- *I would like to see a painting of me at the gallery*
- *MK Gallery have started charging now and I'm on a low income*
- *The tubs of ice-cream, they're a lot of money aren't they*



Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

This group would like to see advertising across social media and in more traditional forms, such as newspapers, flyers, and posters. Targeted marketing through carers was one idea, as was advertising through the centres and organisations that disabled people attend regularly. Word of mouth was seen to be an important way for this group to find out about events as some people felt their disability reduces their capacity to seek out things to attend.

- *Everyone used to look at the Citizen*
- *I can list friends with disabilities... who don't really use computers, they don't even really use email, so how would they know about any events unless they were advertised to in more traditional ways*
- *The Council could provide a newsletter to the home helps*
- *Most people have smartphones now... if there is somewhere you could go, a portal for example, different places and you could just stick your phone near it and get information for the next few months*
- *If my friend told me about it I think I might go*
- *I need more time to prepare for things, I work long hours and I have to take breaks... sometimes it makes us not sociable and we have to rely on friends to tell us about stuff*
- *Advertising through organisations such as Inter-Action and Camphill [would help]*
- *[Through MK SNAP] is the best way to contact us*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

Participants in this group felt excluded from roles in the arts and heritage sector because of their disabilities, and because they may not move in the right circles. Their disability posed confidence issues in terms of applying for and keeping roles, because they may need a certain amount of support from an employer. Flexibility in the role is important to this group and feeling included in the location and specifications of job adverts was mentioned. This group would like helpful ways to interact with the sector, and support through mentoring schemes would be welcomed. Being given fair pay was also important.

- *I think artists get really railroaded and disabled artists more so, because there's not much protection for us*
- *I never think there's any [role for me]... so I wouldn't even look... By the time it comes out [it will have gone to] someone who knows that person or knows that role...*
- *If you suffer from anxiety... it's self-confidence... You feel like you lack support and you end up doing nothing and you end up working in low paid jobs and it becomes a social mobility issue*
- *I'd normally lack confidence to apply for things like that... I'm starting to feel that I could pursue a career in the arts because of the support I've had from Inter-Action but until this point I've felt like that could be beyond my reach*
- *Because I have such limited energy levels, flexibility is really important to me*
- *It was too tiring for me to do tours, but I enjoyed it still. I've been thinking about it, but I wouldn't really like to do it all the time*
- *Letting people know what kind of support could be available within that role, then they could accurately assess whether it's something they could actually do, whereas if you have to make guesses you just go, well there's this reason why I couldn't do it, therefore I'm not going to bother applying*

- *It's about feeling welcome and feeling like there are opportunities designed around people who face similar challenges, rather than me always trying to fit into what somebody else is trained to do*
- *Just having something on the advert that says we welcome people with challenges and to actually say that this is a space for you*
- *[A peer mentoring scheme] would have been amazing*
- *Pay [would make the job worthwhile]*

Conclusion

This group believes that the arts add to cultural identity, and that Milton Keynes has a very particular culture because it is a new town. While the group interacted with external examples of cultural activity, such as festivals and other arts and heritage organisations, the theme of loneliness and isolation came through. Television was mentioned as a way through which the world was experienced, but it was associated with 'greyness'. It can be surmised that this attitude towards television is because the activity means staying in, away from social interaction, due to the restrictions a disability can pose, and is often the only realistic option for this group.

What came through is that transport is restrictive, and/or a companion is needed to venture out of the house. Community transport schemes were seen as favourable. While the participants here were aware of arts and heritage organisations in Milton Keynes, if it is not physically able to access events and organisations, they will not be included. Clearer information on websites about disabled access was asked for, as were relaxed performances with content for adults. Lack of representation in programmes, and high prices were mentioned as barriers to participation. As attending to one's own disability reduces the amount of spare time available, hearing about events through friends and social networks was highlighted as a good way to connect with this group.

This group feels that they can be excluded from the workforce in the arts and heritage sector because there are no obvious support systems, and that organisations do not advertise the roles' requirements within a disability context. This leads to lack of confidence on the group's part, because they do not know whether their disability will be welcomed. More helpful ways to interact with organisations were asked for, such as mentoring schemes and guarantees that roles can be flexible. Fair pay was a must.



e. LGBTQ+

Cultural identity and meaning:

Participants in this group identified culture as arts, storytelling, expression and communication. They spoke about the historical and current challenges in bringing LGBTQ+ stories to the forefront, and having the confidence to celebrate this part of their identity openly. As a result of these historical challenges, this LGBTQ+ group was the only one to bring up the idea of a ‘sub-culture’ in relation to ‘mainstream culture’, which was identified as heteronormative, or heterosexual binary.

- The thing about the LGBT plus is sometimes we get erased from history or we don't get mentioned at all [because] in the early days we had to hide what we were a lot. I think it's important that we remind people that we still existed*
- When you're talking about the history of our community... you're often talking historically about a sub-culture... When I first came out back in the 80s we used to go to London a lot to get proper culture that represented our community's history and sensibilities and stuff like that. It wasn't safe to be more open*
- Mainstream culture is still very heteronormative*
- [Mainstream culture in Milton Keynes] is heterosexual binary... what you'd call the straight family, how [it] reacts to their world... it's not obvious that it's a straight culture but it kind of is in some respects*
- Subculture, you'd find it more in cafes and smaller venues... and [it] might be more local performers say, and you'd engage with the subculture... but mainstream culture I'd say is the festivals and the gallery and the theatre*

Cultural activity was seen by the group as a set of ideas, or activity, that brings people together. It was stated that there is not a lot of cultural activity in Milton Keynes that is offered specifically to the LGBTQ+ community, although some organisations and events were mentioned (Pride, Q;Space/Q:Alliance; Switchboard; The Breakfast Club), and some ideas for future gatherings were suggested. The group felt that it is important to feel represented in cultural activity, and that representation sometimes serves the purpose of being a vehicle for political activism. Some cultural activity aimed at LGBTQ+ communities was mentioned in relation to it being secret in some way, promoting feelings of marginalisation.

- [Cultural activity] it's about listening to people's different stories, young and old so we can both understand*
- It would be kind of nice to get the young and the old together to sit down and talk to each other, as part of our culture to say we existed here*
- [In Milton Keynes] it's more of a personal interest rather than something to do with LGBTQ identity, it's not really queer culture I would say*
- [MK Litfest] have LGBT people on their steering group so they get LGBT writers in, and it's not an LGBT festival specifically, but it's well represented within their programme - they have writers that [the LGBTQ+ community] will be interested in so I think that makes a difference*
- [The V&A] do a LGBT tour... they take you to all the kind of different places in the gallery that has an LGBT history to it... but I don't know if we have anything [like that in Milton Keynes]*

- [Pride] means for one day we can come out and say who we are... it is something you go to maybe because you want to see other people just like you... in the old days [Pride] was going out onto the street saying we still exist you can't get rid of us*
- Somebody had to do it first and the reason we can all sit here and lead fairly open lives is because somebody's done it before us*
- If you want a tradition there is the famous lesbian potluck where everybody brings something to eat... [it happens in Milton Keynes] if you know the right people*
- [The Transgender Memorial Day] it's quite a public event... its [planning] is kept a secret*
- I would actually love to see a queer history of Milton Keynes... maybe unite the LGBT community a bit... that would be an interesting Living Archive thing*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

Participants highlighted the importance of knowing that venues and events would be accepting of LGBTQ+ communities, specifically transgender. Signs such as flags are good marketing indicators that venues are accepting, although the group called for authenticity when using these signals, rather than just being ploys. Attending in groups was also mentioned as a way to feel safe. The group also mentioned how specific events aimed at LGBTQ+ communities would encourage them to attend particular venues and events, but a lot of things they attend are not aimed specifically at the LGBTQ+ community and so they go because of other interests. More feelings of marginalisation were brought up in relation to complaints about LGBTQ+ activity in the sector, made by members of the wider community. Education and training were suggested as ways to help organisations develop inbuilt values of inclusivity, rather than tokenism.

- The art world [is usually welcoming], but I like to check in because sometimes you don't know how some of them are going to be about it*
- I talked to someone [at Arts Gateway] and said, are you ok with trans people here? A friend of mine was trans and they said [that's not] a problem*
- [Organisations and venues] can be intolerant, I'm lucky that with my group that I go to they are tolerant, but... I feel like the elephant in the bloody room... with me it's to make sure they're gonna be tolerant because of how I'm dressed at the moment*
- Cultural organisations [think] oh we'll put a rainbow flag out to show that we're inclusive, but if they engaged with doing projects around LGBT... maybe putting a spotlight on artists they work with who identify as LGBT, work with queer themes that they could showcase so it's not just a hint towards, it's actually how we're being inclusive, through our actions rather than through our marketing*
- A supermarket might put a rainbow flag out, but you can still overhear staff in the aisles making a joke of sexual orientation... that's wallpaper rather than values*
- Some people would see [talks aimed at LGBTQ+ communities] as propaganda... [they] don't want you to be educated on that... if it's openly LGBTQ+ you will get a small minority of people who will complain about it*
- A lot of [complaints] come down to sex and what you do when you're having sex. I'm a lesbian whether or not I'm in a relationship, that doesn't stop me being a lesbian, I'm still a lesbian when I'm doing the laundry and I'm still a lesbian when I'm going to the shops!*
- Maybe it's about education, it's the language that people use, so not assuming your partner is a man or a woman, saying 'they' - things like that could really be woven into conversations... there is assumed heterosexuality*
- They don't want to alienate the straight people... [they say] we like you, but the straights might get a bit miffed off if we show you too much*



Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

The group spoke about the different channels of contact that are aimed at the LGBTQ+ community in Milton Keynes, as well as mainstream channels of communication. A culture directory was suggested. It was also suggested that a commitment to acceptance should be included in an organisation’s marketing.

- *Posting about [LGBTQ+ events] on Facebook [is popular]*
- *Sometimes I hear about things because I am already on a mailing list... but a lot of the time people will say such and such is on, we may get together to go to things*
- *I always look at noticeboards*
- *I would love a culture directory... you can tag it as queer or queer themed or whatever it is, so you could just run a search and you would know what is happening on a calendar*
- *Promote tolerance, so if you go to an event you know it’s gonna be safe for you as an individual*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

Participants did not want tokenistic roles for LGBTQ+ communities, and wanted to work for organisations that were truly inclusive. Organisations authentically upholding inclusive values, such as using well-thought out terminology and providing signs that LGBTQ+ people were encouraged to become part of the workforce, was important to the group. MK Gallery was praised for including ‘trans’ and non-binary’ as gender categories on one of its forms. Income was mentioned as a reason why some would not be inclined to apply for jobs in the sector.

- *Knowing you’re there because they want you to be there, not just to be a token to come out and say, look we have a queer person working for us*
- *Some of the cultures and organisations are not that inclusive, maybe in their programming, but when you actually work in them [not] necessarily on a LGBTQ+ side of things*
- *You can be seriously right on with your advertising but when it comes to approaching recruitment you could be really off, it just feels like window dressing*
- *I check the terminology on the equal opportunities forms. If they’ve got their terminology wrong then I generally have an instinct of whether they [maybe] don’t care*
- *You often see on adverts that they say we are particularly looking for applicants from say BME backgrounds, or disability. I don’t think I’ve ever seen one with an LGBT*
- *A lot of the time I don’t think it’s even on the Equal Opportunities form, so a lot of them don’t even know what the representation is within their organisation*
- *When I went to [MK Gallery] and volunteered it did say gender and there were different types of gender, trans and non-binary... it’s nice to see it for the first time instead of just he or she*
- *Some of the jobs are underpaid compared to other sectors which makes it difficult*

Conclusion

This group viewed culture as the expression of stories. The historical challenges of the LGBTQ+ community can affect the confidence in telling those stories, and the group does not feel as if their stories are fully represented in mainstream cultural activity. They called

the mainstream ‘heteronormative’, in other words designed to tell the stories of straight culture, and saw the expression of LGBTQ+ stories as a sub-culture. This demonstrates the ongoing political fight and struggle that the LGBTQ+ community has towards feeling included and represented in mainstream culture. Yet the importance of the fight was recognised, as like any other group, an objective of representation through LGBTQ+ stories is to promote cohesion and belonging.

Bringing LGBTQ+ people together offers a support network to those that feel isolated because of their gender or sexual preference. It then becomes the challenge to the arts and heritage sector to integrate the sub-culture into the mainstream. There are some events in Milton Keynes for the LGBTQ+ community, but in general there is still fear amongst the LGBTQ+ community (especially transgender individuals) that venues and organisations will not be tolerant of their identities. Therefore, authentic and transparent signs need to be displayed to show that not only is there acceptance, but that it runs throughout the organisation as an inbuilt value. Education and training for staff was suggested as a way of doing this, and an understanding of the representation of LGBTQ+ in audiences and workforces would help. The evidence of acceptance then needs to be marketed in job descriptions and opportunities and in programming. Tokenism should be avoided at all costs.



Shenia Asiyama singing at MK Rose for International Women’s Day 8 March 2020

f. Socio-economic deprivation

Cultural identity and meaning

Participants in this group see culture as a set of values that people live by. Social structures such as faith and nationalities are seen to influence culture, and culture can be found in stories told through arts and heritage. Milton Keynes has lots of identities, history and stories, and incomers can experience this in different ways. It is recognised that culture can change and adapt according to historical context, but the right social structures have to be in place for this to happen. It can be difficult to break through powerful cultural structures in order to create new ones that are more representative.

- *It's a way of life of a community... I suppose you could say it's the values people live by*
- *I see culture as the broader engagement of people in history, the arts, museums, art galleries*
- *You've got cultural norms within different ethnicities, within religious groups, within social structures*
- *There probably is a storytelling element to it all*
- *There's a lot of history in Milton Keynes, it's all tucked around*
- *When I first came to Milton Keynes in 74... my labour force was lodging in Woughton and then you had the works, and as you went down Wolverton that was Wolverton works and that was the workers. If you went to a pub in Wolverton they wouldn't speak to you, you were totally blanked, if you're at the works, that's it, you're out*
- *[During the 1970s] a lot of people descended on Milton Keynes [for opportunities], took over... back then it must've been quite hard because you've got lots of different cultures going in*
- *Within the Parish Council we had many, many different things where we wonder about culture (for example) I objected to some underpass graffiti... and I realised, hang on a minute, this is the culture of our young kids*
- *[A couple of years ago] it was brought up about the way that Parish Councils are, the demographics of the Parish Council are male, pale and stale, and that doesn't allow for cultures to form within the Parishes*

Cultural activity is seen by this group as events that bring people together, and these events can be small or large, organised or spontaneous, and a form of expression. In modern Milton Keynes the festivals of diverse communities celebrate different nationalities and social groupings. This group remembers early Milton Keynes settlers coming from different parts of the UK, and specific local calendar events where people came together to express their belonging to the town. This created a sense of community.

- *I think cultural activity includes a whole range of things that are both fixed and moveable, organised and not, organic and planned*
- *I think it's everything from... the folk singer at the pub through to the large big cultural events*
- *The last time we had [an African event] the people were there to demonstrate how their culture is about clothing, food, whatever*

- *Cultural activity... we see an awful lot of it in Milton Keynes, the Indian Community with their culture, Diwali and the festival of lights and the same with Eid and although that's religious festivals, it's also a highlight of the culture of the city*
- *The International Festival, the Festival of World Picnics... even Pride*
- *One of the things I always remember, it wasn't a formal event as such, but we lived on Conniburrow and it was New Year's Eve and at five to twelve we had Londoners, Northerners, everybody all singing Happy New Year to everybody... that was back 40 years ago*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

Participants in this group particularly highlighted price as a barrier to enjoying the arts and heritage offer in Milton Keynes. They look for cheaper prices elsewhere and often attend events in neighbouring towns instead. The public transport system in Milton Keynes also prevents people from accessing venues and events. Some of this group perceived the arts and heritage sector to be for middle-class people, and others argued that these perceptions need to be challenged in order to help people to feel welcome in the sector. Despite these barriers, participants had engaged with the sector in different ways, and while some venues and events were deemed to be less accessible than they once were, the group liked to experience events that connected with their Milton Keynes identity.

- *I've recently stopped going to the gallery because they started charging. Prior to the upgrade you'd go around, you'd do your shopping, you'd see what there is. There's now a barrier... If I was there on a Tuesday [when it is free to MK residents] I'd be there... I'm actually really narked that they've had this huge investment and what that's done is almost put an additional barrier in place for people to access*
- *I think one day free a week is limiting a lot of people and I know an awful lot of residents, not only on my parish but also this parish that can't afford to pay and at the same time can't take their children out of school on a Tuesday*
- *I love going to the theatre, can't afford it all the time, it is extremely expensive. And if it's at the theatre in Milton Keynes it's often 9 times out of 10 more expensive than the bigger Derngate, more expensive than London*
- *The tickets at the pantomime are very expensive. Quite a lot of our Residents Associations have to go for grants. One of our estates even does to Northampton because it's so expensive... perhaps working with Residents' Associations to have local, special performances that are going to be cheaper for them*
- *Information on what is accessible, which is of a lower price, would be handy*
- *Cost is an issue and... transport for sure*
- *We have an absolutely rubbish bus service in Milton Keynes... it limits an awful lot of people and The Stables is impossible to get to*
- *MK Museum, The Stables... There's probably a perception that some of these venues are middle class*
- *The renovated [MK Gallery], the first time I walked in there, I pretty much walked straight out again... I found it quite intimidating in terms of, it's a judgemental atmosphere*
- *The barrier to entry is more to do with perceived social status or class as opposed to anything else that's necessarily concrete*
- *We need to make it a little bit more accessible in terms of the stuff we put in there... it doesn't have to be from Milton Keynes but a bit more applicable to our class of people... otherwise it risks being quite an exclusive thing*



- *We cannot make generalisations about people who live in a C or D or an A or B sector that they don't want to see great art*
- *I think the best thing we can do is actually make sure that people have the right information, by putting it through various information outlets like social media, the paper... a lot of problems are caused because there's misinformation where somebody heard something and then said it to somebody else*
- *Some years ago there was a lot of Art on Prescription for people with various illnesses, mental health, whatever. It is quite hard to get onto those now... limited numbers*
- *The Living Archive is of interest... there was a book they produced on Wolverton and I recently went to Milton Keynes Museum*

Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

There was a general feeling amongst this group that there is a lot going on in the Milton Keynes arts and heritage sector, but they do not know where to look to find out about it. Parish councils and Residents' Associations were mentioned as good ways to connect directly, as was Facebook, local radio and community noticeboards. Word of mouth was thought of as a good selling tool as it provides positive reinforcements from familiar people.

- *Milton Keynes [is not] very good at promoting what's going on*
- *Milton Keynes is good at doing a lot of stuff, but not telling people about it*
- *Where do you find out what's on?... It used to be that it was Destination MK, I mean there's no office or anything anymore that you can pick up a booklet or whatever*
- *I've lived in Milton Keynes since I was seven, it was only two or three years ago that I found out we had a museum*
- *Organisations need to let their local Parish Councils know, because they can get stuff out so easily... as long as it's 3 months in advance I can get adverts out in our magazine in Campbell Park and it goes to 6,600 houses*
- *People gravitate towards [credible means of communication]... You have to know where to look and if you don't know where to look, you don't know about it*
- *Plenty of people on our estates don't look on social media. Tesco shops, community council notice boards, just to be a little bit creative [would be better]*
- *Let's say Residents' Associations wanted to organise a minibus and had the right kind of pricing, it would eliminate the transport issue and these kind of things would make a good day out*
- *[Share a booklet] with Residents' Associations to see if they can drum up an open day where we know we have to pay, but if it's a discounted day we could advertise it to more people and try to get it through different times in the year*
- *You could put quotes on the booklet... sometimes quotes from people are the best selling tools*
- *Word of mouth can generate a lot of revenue and especially if you can get to all the Residents' Associations*
- *First thing in the morning I listen to Three Counties... when I'm in the car on my own, I'll listen to the radio*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

This group recognised that getting children involved in arts and heritage helps to foster an appreciation for the work that occurs in this sector. However, perceptions of low pay do not make the choice to work in the sector a valid one if someone has many financial commitments. Some participants would like to work in the sector and have much to offer, but the opportunity has not been presented. Because of both time and low pay, other participants only see joining the sector a possibility if they volunteer when they are retired.

- *If you get young people into somewhere like the gallery, that is the seed to move on to appreciate art and sculptures*
- *My youngest son's brother-in-law, he is an artist. He's a very, very talented artist but he has a wife and two young children. The arts will not sustain him*
- *[I would encourage my children] to do whatever they want to do and support them*
- *But they've got mortgages, wives, partners, kids, etc., so they need the money*
- *I've considered volunteering for Bletchley Park or for Milton Keynes Museum*
- *I would work at the Gallery... I'm a chef, I do activities as well and I can do support work... there's a lot I can do to help*
- *In terms of volunteering, yeah, if something came up that fitted around the fact that I'm working until 8 o'clock every night*
- *When you get to retirement you get to do what you want... it's a lovely place to be, when you can just do that soul food stuff, the stuff that really floats your boat*

Conclusion

Participants in this focus group see culture and cultural activity as strongly relating to arts and heritage. For them, culture is made up of stories and it expresses identity, and can adapt and change over time. Cultural activity can create a sense of community and belonging. Most participants were familiar with the organisations in the arts and heritage sector, and expressed awareness of powerful cultural structures which are difficult to break through. Price, transport, and perceptions of activity and spaces being for 'the middle classes' were mentioned as the main barriers to accessing the arts and heritage sector. There was a call for the arts and heritage sector to deliver affordable options and clear messages that arts and heritage are welcoming and for everyone. If events and venues feel exclusive, then they are not inclusive. The effort to be inclusive must be made from the moment a person chooses to connect with the organisation.

Participants asked for programmes that connected with various aspects of their local identities, but they did not want to be patronised. The work must remain challenging, informative and interesting. Lack of targeted advertising and awareness of what is going on in the sector causes much mis-information about the accessibility of organisations and events. It also causes feelings of 'not for me' to be fostered. Building relationships with Residents' Associations and Parish Councils could help arts and heritage organisations access this community. As with most groups, a lack of targeted advertising and awareness of what is going on in the sector causes much mis-information about the accessibility of organisations and events. It also causes feelings of 'not for me' to be fostered. Low pay was the main reason why this community would not consider a career in the arts and heritage sector. However, some have a keen interest in the sector and would like to volunteer.



g. Women

Cultural identity and meaning

Participants in this group view culture as a set of values and rules that people live by. Culture is shaped by geography, family, traditions, and faith and it shapes identity and action. It is adaptable and malleable according to different interpretations in place and time. Taking on aspects of different cultures and behaving similarly to that culture can help with integration and fostering a sense of belonging.

- *When I think of culture, I think of identity, I think of values, I think of the way we present ourselves*
- *It's what we've inherited or maybe rules*
- *Getting a sense of different areas and different people and different celebrations*
- *[Food] and dress*
- *Culture is a uniqueness for a group of people... It could be an individual thing [that] could be transferred to some other group of people that have new ideas... It could go along with your faith, food, dressing*
- *We're from Africa and we've adapted to this culture [to be] part of the community. Otherwise [we would] struggle*
- *My kids were born here... as much as we're trying to teach them our cultures they need to know the culture that they're born into so they're involved in different activities that happen in Milton Keynes*

Cultural activity was thought of by this group as activity that encourages community and belonging. It is an expression of identity, and in a multicultural society offers an opportunity to share and experience a variety of beliefs, values and behaviours. The group said that the activity itself can be related to the arts, but understood it as anything that brings people together. Activities that bring people together are essential for the mental health of both individuals and the collective.

- *Dancing, music, food, family. I was thinking of New York where there is so many different communities and the diversity and the openness so that you can experience lots of different things*
- *It's the festivals... they're sharing their music, their food, their clothing*
- *It's games as well. Through games you learn a lot about the people [who play them]... [In Africa] we have ones with seeds and ones where you talk*
- *Different designs of material... wearing outfits*
- *Senior meet ups*
- *Black History Month*
- *Crafts round the table... we have a lovely evening making things and talking... a way to get that community feeling*
- *[Wolverton] do a lot of stuff like the Lantern Festival, the Scarecrow Festival... they work hard at bringing everybody in*
- *I think activities are essential for our wellbeing. We have to have company... if we don't it causes isolation*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

When asked to name local cultural organisations participants gave examples of organisations that deal with ethnicity and some venue based arts and heritage organisations. Price came up as a barrier to being able to participate in the sector. The group would like the opportunity to participate in exhibitions and events interactively. Participants would also like to see more art that relates to their Milton Keynes identities and also their female identities. They thought that 'gateways' to the sector, such as meet-ups in venues, would make the sector more accessible and welcoming for newcomers and people who do not have many connections. Attending events and activities with a group can be easier than attending alone. Coffee mornings were suggested as events that could attract women, and there could be events specifically for women who volunteer. The group accesses activity with and for their children. When the children can interact with the activity it gives them a sense of ownership and the enthusiasm grows.

- *I understand that some exhibitions [at MK Gallery] you might need to pay to go and see... but [I feel that] puts barriers up for some people who would appreciate culture but might not be able to afford it*
- *If there was an opportunity for [adults] to meet the artists and do activity around the installation [and] didn't have barriers like cost that would be really good*
- *I know everything can't be free, but there's lots of children that would love to go in to do some dancing, acting or whatever for confidence building, but [price] is a little bit of a barrier... it does knock off some people*
- *I would like to see more community art*
- *Part of our heritage in Milton Keynes was about developing artists, building sculptures... I'm not sure we're really celebrating that and I really do feel we should be*
- *[An exhibition focusing on women] empowers you in a way*
- *It's having a gateway that's like an introduction... I'll look at the internet but then overcoming that barrier [to participate in events is difficult] because I don't have many connections... to have somewhere to go first [that's] a bit more gentle [where] you can make those connections*
- *It can be scary as a woman coming into a new area and not knowing groups*
- *It's a big thing to be welcomed somewhere for your part*
- *If you're with a group of people and they say yes, we're going, you would [be more likely to] go*
- *Coffee and some food is a really good icebreaker for anything... [it] brings people together and women talking, food, cakes*
- *I see the business networking lunches [and] that's kind of intimidating because my work isn't paid and so I think [an event] for different people like me in the community that could all come together and it's a bit more low-key*
- *My kids love to explore different things and it's keeping them active... By getting them involved they're more enthusiastic about it. The main reason that we attend anything is if they can be involved*
- *What makes me go to the theatre is my daughter*

Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

Although participants access different information portals such as EventBrite, mailing lists, and radio, they did not feel as if the sector marketed to them directly, or as if they really know what goes on in the sector. The group would like the information to be easily



accessible, and for it to be a centralised tool that informs about the variety of city-wide events and organisations. It was suggested that organisations could speak at community gatherings in order to connect with those communities.

- *Sometimes there has to be something to draw you to go on to that website, if there isn't you'd never know [what goes on], so it's lack of advertising*
- *There's a lot going on in Milton Keynes... We have all these wonderful things going on and we don't know unless you said it to us... we're not communicating and we should be*
- *I think some of these activities are not really advertised*
- *It's about signposting people*
- *[I use] EventBrite, and actually I have opted for Milton Keynes Council sending information*
- *I go on Secklow while driving. Secklow, MKFM and Heart just to see what's happening*
- *Many years ago they set up a directory which was amazing because it was a booklet*
- *It would be amazing if groups' and organisations' representatives could meet up once every couple of months, even just to say we've got this going on*
- *It would be good to have something that you know you don't have to look at all these different websites – a centralised diary*
- *If you can connect to [the African] community... we would invite someone from your organisation to come to talk to us*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

Participants were aware of a range of jobs that exist in the sector. The particularities of the position such as full-time, part-time, paid or unpaid would influence participants' decisions in terms of working or volunteering in the sector. When asked if they would consider applying for a role at the organisations, participants presumed that it would be for a volunteer position, rather than a paid role. Most of the group felt too busy to volunteer at this point in time. One member of the group was aware of job portals such as Arts Jobs because she has learned about different career websites through her job at an employability charity. She made the point that people can learn where to look if helped. Other participants look for jobs through web searches or contacting organisations directly. The group would encourage their children to gain experience working in the sector.

- *Sometimes you can overload your stuff with all the stuff you're already doing as a volunteer and so it depends on what kind of role it is*
- *I wouldn't be able to visualise fitting that in with other things at the moment*
- *Probably not at this moment in time because I'm fairly busy with what I'm doing*
- *I would consider it, yeah, I've considered volunteering at the museum*
- *The English Arts Council have a big website and jobs all the time... We are an employability charity [and] always mindful of things that might be helpful... it's just a learning thing really*
- *I Google [job titles]*
- *Go to the website [of the organisation]*
- *When [my children] decide to go to the workplace it builds confidence, their language skills, and they articulate themselves a bit better because they have that experience*
- *Citizenship, or whatever they learn in school, does infer them into this cultural thing*
- *It's from when the children are young that they start implementing the culture in respect to where they are in the world*

Conclusion

This group of women look at culture as a set of values and rules to live by. While culture is rooted in traditions, people can take on aspects of other communities' cultures and this encourages integration and belonging. Participants in this group who were not born in Milton Keynes sought out opportunities to share and join in with local activity to bring them closer to the community. By doing so, they recognised that their mental health would benefit. This is a very important point, as when inclusive practices benefit the mental health of individuals, they also benefit the mental health of the collective. Thus, sound and persistent practices of inclusion and diversity are vital for a happier and healthier society. The group could name some arts and heritage organisations, and these were mostly venue based, although non-venue based organisations that represent different ethnicities were also listed. Price was seen as a barrier to participating in the arts and heritage sector. The group wanted to see and connect with programmes that represent different aspects of their identities and work that is local. This facilitates a sense of ownership and that the work is for them.

Inviting people to be included in the sector could be done in stages, as many different factors such as isolation, lack of confidence, lack of education, lack of awareness etc. can be barriers to accepting invitations. Introductory events such as coffee mornings would help, or events that are specifically aimed at women who volunteer, or women who are not working. It is easier to attend with a group, and activities for children are popular. Participants noted the lack of direct marketing that comes to them from the sector, and did not feel well informed about what goes on in the sector. Signposts, such as connecting with communities at gatherings, are needed to increase this knowledge and awareness. While participants could name a range of jobs in the sector, they did not see a career in the sector as an option, but did see themselves as potential volunteers. This may be to do with the perception of skills and/or job knowledge. With the right training and information, diverse communities can learn where jobs in the sector are advertised, and likewise, the sector can learn to advertise jobs and opportunities in places where diverse communities look. This group would be happy for their children to gain experience working in the sector.



Mike Kasibo With High Sheriff Julia Upton and Parks Trust Hannah Bodley and Julie Dawes, African Diaspora Festival July 2019



h. Young People

Cultural identity and meaning

Participants in this focus group thought of culture as a value system. It can be part of an identity that is related to family, or any other institution or group, and facilitates belonging. This group recognised that cultural identity differentiates groups of people from one another.

- *[Culture is] what you believe in*
- *What you believe in and my past, so what my mum did as a child or how she grew up with her parents*
- *It's a group of people's identity*
- *Where you're from, how you're raised*
- *Culture is community*
- *When different schools are competing against each other, it's a culture... MK College culture is where we come from*

Cultural activity was identified by the young people as expression through the arts, religious festivals, food and clothing. They saw cultural activity as action that defines who someone is.

- *Creative stuff, like dancing and singing*
- *In South America you have carnivals and stuff*
- *Religious festivals*
- *Clothing*
- *Food*
- *Cultural activity can define who you are*

Feeling welcomed by the local arts and heritage sector

The young people could name a variety of arts and heritage organisations in Milton Keynes. Some had visited these organisations with family and school. In general, there was a lack of interest in engaging with the sector independently. Activities that interest this group include: drill music, comic cons, films, video games, cars, theatre.

- *My family have a tradition every Christmas of going to see the Panto at the theatre*
- *I went to [MK Arts Centre] with my family*
- *I went [to Bletchley Park] when I was younger*
- *This year I went with my mum to watch Mamma Mia. It was so fun*
- *I'm not really interested in any [of these organisations]*

Marketing in the local arts and heritage sector

This group was not aware of what goes on in the arts and heritage sector. They mostly frequent the cinema and fast food outlets with their friends, and want places to 'hang out'. When accessing the cinema programme they look to social media apps such as Snapchat, or they go directly to the venue itself. Word of mouth helps these young people to be

informed about the activities that interest their peer-groups. Advertising near bus stops or on the corridors of college/school were seen as ways to reach this group.

- *I'm not really aware of the events that happen at these venues*
- *Snapchat, or when you go to the cinema on the screen it shows*
- *I use Snapchat loads*
- *Sometimes we hear from our friends, oh have you seen this movie?*
- *I just hear about stuff*
- *Put up a flyer [in] the city centre... near the bus stops*
- *Maybe advertising on college corridors*

Working and/or volunteering in the local arts and heritage sector

This group was aware of a range of different job roles in the arts and heritage sector, such as artists, actors, stagehands, costume designers, set designers, marketing and advertising. The group thought that it would be fun to work in the sector, but viewed working there as a rarity and thought that certain skills are required. Participants thought that working in the sector could be suitable for part-time work, and also viewed it as a possible career, but that was something to consider when they were older. In general, working in the sector was viewed as a positive thing.

- *So there's like box office and technical stuff*
- *Actors and actresses*
- *Cleaners, security, vendors*
- *Stagehands, set-designers, costuming*
- *Marketing and advertising are big departments*
- *I'd like to work in the theatre on the sets, props and costumes*
- *[Working in the sector] sounds more fun than other things*
- *It's kind of an exclusive thing, you don't see many people with these kinds of jobs*
- *You have to be skilled for it*
- *[Working in the sector is] such a great learning experience for anyone who's just starting a part-time job*
- *For part-timers it's such a great learning experience of what a job is like and how it works*
- *Most young people don't know what they want to do for a career*
- *[Through working in the sector] young people can get lots of opportunities... it leads to a lot of different jobs very easily*
- *As long as the person who's doing it enjoys it, then it is a great experience and it prepares someone further*
- *I have two jobs... with the window cleaning, my dad used to do it... with the [pub] my mum's been working there for five years*

Conclusion

This group of young people identified culture as an identity and value system of behaviours and beliefs that facilitate belonging to the social groups one is engaged with. The arts, religion, food and clothing are activities and choices that help people to define and express who they are. They were aware of a range of arts and heritage organisations in Milton Keynes, but had mostly attended these with their families or schools. Group members



spoke passionately and with enjoyment about their experiences in the sector, but mostly independent interaction with the organisations did not interest, or perhaps did not seem possible, to this group. This may be because the organisations are seen as places for adults, or places to go with family and school, which rules out real ownership and belonging for young people.

Additionally, the group is interested in certain activities such as drill music, cars, video games etc., but they do not see direct pathways with these interests and the arts and heritage sector. Similarly, hanging out with friends and attending the cinema are not seen as activities facilitated by the sector, even though some venues hold film nights. Indeed, the group did not have experience of being marketed to directly by the sector, but mentioned that bus stops and school or college corridors would be places they would notice adverts. Snapchat came across as the most popular social media app, and if something appeared there they would know about it. Word of mouth was also mentioned as a powerful communication method.

It was when the conversation moved to working in the sector that the group gave the most in depth answers. This may be because they are at an age when people are asking them what they would like to do with their futures, and some of them and their friends have part-time jobs. The group could name quite a few roles that exist in the sector, and thought that working in these roles would be ‘fun’, and expressed lots of interest in working in the sector. Yet there was a perception that the roles were exclusive and difficult to access. This group mainly finds jobs through family and warm contacts.



African Diaspora Day 2019

Research Findings Sector Survey: Milton Keynes Arts and Heritage organisations

The Survey

The following section outlines the approach arts and heritage organisations take towards inclusion and diversity, as collected through a survey sent out to the sector Autumn 2019. This paper reports on the answers to the survey questions. It provides an insight into the concerns and challenges the sector faces, and reveals the different levels at which arts and heritage organisations in Milton Keynes practise inclusion and diversity. There follows a summary of findings and recommendations.

The survey asked questions about inclusive and diverse practices in relation to organisational culture, attitudes, workforce, volunteers, programming, audiences, and monitoring and evaluation methods. It consisted of 16 questions which were tested for suitability with the sector and the consultation group before distribution. Survey Monkey was used as the distribution tool, and the survey was held open for two months. Help was offered to those organisations that found it difficult to complete, and some face-to-face meetings with the sector were conducted. A copy of the survey questions can be found in appendices on page 71 of this report.

Surveys were sent to 35 organisations in Milton Keynes, and 21 were returned completed. The organisations that responded included the three Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and the large heritage venues, as well as some of the smaller and medium sized arts and heritage organisations. Of those that did reply, questions 4 and 7 (both requiring specific monitoring data) proved to be ‘problem questions’, as no two organisations presented their answers in the same way, with many leaving these answers blank. Feedback suggests that these two survey question were rather complex and ambitious in their expectations; and that current monitoring and evaluation methods and information across the sector are underdeveloped and inconsistent. This is clearly an area that needs to be developed so that we can first benchmark and then map the progress and impact of our inclusion and diversity journey going forward.

Q.1 What does ‘culture’ mean to you and your organisation?

This question was asked to both organisations and communities in order to interpret what was understood by the term culture by both groups. It helps identify whether the term ‘cultural activity’ is understood by all, whether it promotes what goes on in the cultural sector, or if it is working at cross-purposes with what communities understand cultural activity to be.

Answers in this section convey how organisations align themselves with the term ‘culture’, and suggest how they see their responsibility to deliver culture according to the definition they provide.



Art form-led

- Celebrating the art of theatre in all its wonders... staging thought provoking pieces which help make sense of the world
- Culture means accessibility to other art forms, inclusion and diversity
- All genres of performance together with any form of visual art. Any way someone can express themselves through an art form whether they take part or just view
- Culture for us encompasses art, history, sport, cultural events and festivals
- Activity, including theatre, dance, opera, comedy and many other art forms, which entertains, enlightens and educates

Community-led/heritage-based

- Using arts involvement as a way of promoting inclusion and improving life chances for those who face challenge [and] how we do things round here and what makes us a community
- The possibilities from the cultural background bought by all MK's communities and places
- Culture is about identity, sense of belonging and acceptance
- It is difficult to limit culture. It enriches life, it identifies and separates us. Different languages, different foods
- The appreciation of traditions, customs or achievements also the preservation of heritage
- A person's heritage and upbringing [expanding] to the arts as a whole. Culture can include an offer from a place – i.e. what is the cultural offer, which can include any experience which can include the arts
- Celebrating the places and people living in and around Milton Keynes through unique engagement with the arts and artists
- Culture to us is about discovery. It is about bringing people together to share in an experience which may develop knowledge and understanding, or simply be for enjoyment – whilst also recognising that each response and each experience will be different
- What you are and what you spend your time on... shared heritage is the way people share their identity
- Culture to us can refer to two things – the heritage of a person or place and the collective term for arts, heritage, public art, music
- Anything of interest historically, artistically, socially

General

- Sharing and interpreting wider understandings of our world: appreciating beauty and human endeavour
- Development of skills, arts, life patterns, health initiatives, religious and philosophical thought and political idealism, and both the roots and contemporary outcomes thereof
- Anything that is made or created, influenced or determined by society and humankind
- It is what we do... it is more than an optional extra or luxury. It is more than arts and music. It includes sport, food, heritage, habits. Culture is life

These answers suggest that most organisations see culture as relating to the practice of art and heritage and/or community, and some regard culture to be a more general or philosophical term. Those answers that concentrate mostly on activity and community use words and phrases like 'history', 'making sense of the world', 'enlighten and educate' and 'any way someone can express themselves'. This suggests the term culture refers to tradition and/or the way in which things are done.



One organisation said:

- Culture isn't a term we frequently use, in fact other than when referencing strategic documents or organisations, you will not find it in our business plan

While a definition of what culture meant to the organisation was given after this statement, the statement itself suggests that the organisation does not want to be aligned with the term. By stating it is not mentioned in the business plan demonstrates that the organisation does not see itself as trading in 'culture'.

Q2: Where would you consider your organisation to be on the journey towards becoming an exemplar organisation in terms of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?

Organisations were given a choice of 5 answers as follows:

- Level 1 Inactive: No D&I work has begun; diversity and a culture of inclusion are not part of organisational goals: Chosen by **5% (1 organisation)**
- Level 2 Reactive: A compliance mindset; actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures: Chosen by **10% (2 organisations)**
- Level 3 Proactive: A clear awareness of the value of D&I; starting to implement Equality, Diversity & Inclusion systemically: Chosen by **52% (11 organisations)**
- Level 4 Progressive: Implementing Equality, Diversity & Inclusion systematically; showing improved results and outcomes: Chosen by **19% (4 organisations)**
- Level 5 Best Practice: Demonstrating current best practice in Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; exemplary for other organisations globally: Chosen by **14% (3 organisations)**

Q3: Why did you choose that answer?

Question 3 asked organisations to justify their answer for question 2.

Level 1: No D&I work has begun; diversity and a culture of inclusion are not part of organisational goals

The organisation that chose Level 1 stated 'we are a small organisation of voluntary groups, some of whom are highly inclusive but we have not considered it as a collective'. This organisation recognises that inclusion and diversity were not built into its strategy, even though some of the groups it is involved with practise inclusivity. Thus, its achievements in being diverse and inclusive are not strategically planned.

Level 2: Reactive: A compliance mindset; actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures

One organisation that chose Level 2, reactive, stated 'We wish to be as inclusive as practically possible but as a volunteer-only organisation we do not have the resources to develop systems. As volunteers we have more important jobs to do including ensuring our organisation survives'. This organisation is facing challenges around resources and priorities. Crucially, it does not consider the development of inclusion and diversity plans as being key to its survival. The other organisation that chose level 2 stated 'inclusion and diversity are in [our] strategy but we have only taken small steps so far. Key to our future development are new policies and approaches around diversity and inclusion'. This organisation acknowledges that it is at the beginning of its journey, and recognises that new approaches to inclusion and diversity are key to its future development.



Level 3: Proactive: A clear awareness of the value of D&I; starting to implement Equality, Diversity & Inclusion systemically

In total, eleven organisations stated they were at Level 3, proactive. Five of these organisations chose this answer because they are aware of inclusion and diversity as an organisational need and have started to implement a strategy towards its development. These answers did not expand on the particularities of the work, but offered phrases that alluded to diversity and inclusion strategies and practices such as ‘[we ensure] new projects consider [diversity and inclusion] as a priority’, ‘actively addressing how we can approach balancing our programme [...] through action’, and ‘[we consider] participation in projects [and] inclusion in recruitment’. One organisation asked for help in the further development of its inclusion and diversity strategy, stating ‘mentoring and guidance would be appreciated, possibly through benchmarking’.

Four organisations chose Level 3 because they have an awareness of the value of inclusion and diversity (one states it has been ‘identified as a priority’) but do not yet have structures in place to implement the strategies systematically. Another states ‘we have a way to go before we can achieve representation (gender balance in workforce but representation of other diversity to be addressed)’. Finances, resources and venue restrictions are quoted as issues that affect positive change in this area. One states ‘[we] are trying to find ways to do this but still have a long way to go’. Another states: ‘there is still a long way to go before we can be proud of our achievements’.

One organisation provides little information to this question, stating simply that ‘little was done proactively, historically’.

The final organisation that chose level 3 provided lots of evidence to back up its answer. This organisation operates a Community Ambassador programme that ‘works with diverse communities to improve community confidence’ by building ‘trust and relationships’ and hosts ‘several cultural community events’. Its staff have ‘undergone training in diversity as well as other areas such as dementia, disability and mental health awareness’, and the organisation holds regular events for people with dementia, wheelchair users and people with lower mobility. There is ‘representation’ on the board and it aims to work with a ‘more diverse workforce and volunteering team’.

The actions described specifically around training, demonstrate that experts have been consulted, and it is also clear that representation through programming and staffing is a key element of how its policies are implemented. Describing itself as level three ‘proactive’ rather than level 4 ‘progressive’, despite its efforts outlined, suggests both a modest and realistic approach and that the organisation has an action plan that includes objectives beyond what it has already achieved. This organisation has systematically introduced behavioural change and has created strategies that clearly demonstrate the values of inclusion and diversity.

Level 4 Progressive: Implementing Equality, Diversity & Inclusion systematically; showing improved results and outcomes

Four organisations chose to position themselves at level 4, progressive. One mentioned that it is implementing an ‘equality, inclusion and diversity plan’ and that inclusion is ‘central to all considerations... from the board down’. It states that ‘several’ of its programmes ‘specifically address’ inclusion and diversity issues and that it has ‘carried out some staff awareness training’ demonstrating the practice and awareness of an inclusion and diversity strategy. However, it also mentions that ‘there is a long way to go’, which suggests that the plan has not been fully implemented yet and there is still much behavioural change to be achieved.



Another organisation provides two examples of its progressive action: the appointment of a ‘community inclusion officer’, and a successful funding bid to support the transition to become ‘an exemplar’ for ‘accessibility’. Both actions indicate that there is an inclusion and diversity strategy in this organisation that will lead to improved results and outcomes.

A third organisation states that they are ‘a confection of all aspects of life and absolutely open to all as a public space’. Being open to all is extremely important, but it is also vital that diverse communities understand this and feel welcome there.

These survey answers did not always provide evidence of a systematic implementation of inclusion and diversity.

The final organisation that chose level 4 notes that inclusion and diversity are inbuilt in its wider objectives and aims ‘because it is at the heart of what we do’ which implies that this organisation was founded with the creation of equal, diverse and inclusive practices and spaces in mind, and inclusion and diversity policies are what drives it forward structurally and ethically. While this answer does not provide evidence of how inclusion and diversity are systematically implemented, it sets it apart in this section as it sees inclusion and diversity as within its main activity, rather than something that must be developed alongside its main activity.

Level 5 Best Practice: Demonstrating current best practice in Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; exemplary for other organisations globally

Three organisations claimed that they were at level 5, best practice. One organisation mentions an event it recently ran, followed by ‘we are very proactive in this’. Another states ‘we have clear agendas in regards to inclusivity, equality and diversity in the organisation’, but did not provide evidence.

The third organisation states ‘board members are from diverse communities and the organisation was grown from a grassroots level. Our activities and programmes are all based in diversity and inclusion. The nature of the organisation is diversity and inclusion. It is part of who we are’.

The journey of inclusion is ongoing with constant new challenges. The survey reveals that some organisations feel very much in need of advice and support, others feel that are making good progress and some are feeling very confident in their good practice. Current thinking and experience in this field suggests that you never arrive; the more you know, the more you realise what you have to achieve to be truly inclusive. The recent challenges of COVID 19 and Black Lives Matter highlight this.

Q4: How do the various strands of your organisation reflect the diversity of Milton Keynes communities: Please give answers in both figures and percentages and with particular reference to the categories provided: Programming; Audiences; Workforce (including volunteers); Leadership; Governance. Key figures from the 2011 census can be found here: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/statistics/census>

This question proved difficult for the sector to answer, not least because of the way in which the survey required participants to answer in figures and percentages. This in turn tended to frustrate the organisations. This question was in hindsight too ambitious for the current context, as it has demonstrated that monitoring and evaluation of inclusion and



diversity are under-developed and inconsistent, let alone understood in the context of the city’s pattern of diversity. This highlights the need for a sector-wide monitoring and evaluation framework, which is understood and workable for all.

Seven organisations provided no answers, with one stating that no data existed. Fourteen organisations provided some answers, but none which could be measured against the diversity of Milton Keynes, making them invalid for this question. Some of the answers provided were more suitable for question 7, and have been transferred as appropriate.

Q5: Do you have a strategy and/or action plan to widen access and remove barriers to engagement, and/or what active measures have you put in place in the choices you make? Examples of areas where active measures have been taken could be: marketing, welcomes, outreach activities, physical and emotional accessibility, financial choices, programming, staffing etc. etc.

This question is an expansion of question 3 as it specifically asks organisations whether a strategy is in place and to detail the inclusion and diversity work they have engaged with. It examines further the levels at which organisations sit and provides more context from which accurate conclusions can be drawn.

No

Three organisations answered this question with a direct ‘no’. Two of these did not add any other details. The third stated that while it does not have a strategy, it has a ‘Diversity Working Group’ which has identified three strands of focus including recruitment, celebration campaigns (key calendar dates such as Pride, International Women’s Day etc.) and the distribution of an annual diversity survey.

Neither yes or no

Nine organisations did not say ‘yes’ or ‘no’, but provided examples of active measures taken towards inclusion and diversity. Two organisations expanded in detail on the efforts made. One evidenced the percentage breakdown of Black, Asian and ethnically diverse artists delivering core programmes (12% of 25 which is 8% below the organisation’s target of 20%); an audience development plan which includes prioritising Facebook as a platform to reach new communities; its growing profile of education work in primary schools; the recent recruitment of two Black, Asian and ethnically diverse members of staff; and a recruitment drive for trustees to address the gender, race, religious and disability gaps that the board currently has. The other organisation highlighted: its step-free access venue with disability toilet; face-to-face conversations with artists to overcome barriers ‘lengthy applications’ can cause; projects that forge ‘new relationships’; applying for ‘access budgets’ in applications; and reaching a wider audience online. Both organisations mention the development of representative advisory teams for inclusion and diversity. While these two organisations did not state directly whether they have an inclusion and diversity strategy, they are obviously making efforts in this area with strong evidence of strategic thinking.

Three organisations gave shorter answers with one listing ‘marketing, outreach, accessibility, programming’ as its answer, suggesting that events are programmed for and marketed to certain audiences, and that outreach work is carried out. However, it does not give detail about which communities are targeted in its work. It also implies that strategies are devised on a project to project basis as opposed to having an organisation-wide strategy. Another organisation (reliant solely on volunteers) mentions supporting groups through events such as Disability Awareness Day, holding vigils in the wake of terrorist outrages,

and celebrating Commonwealth Day and Refugees Are Welcome Day. It also comments that it is in partnership with a larger organisation which has an inclusion and diversity strategy. This association is helpful as it allows the smaller organisation to benefit from and absorb some activity from the plan of the larger one. Two organisations stated that they are ‘open to all’ or that ‘we market events to all’ but did not share any examples of their active measures to convey this, such as targeted marketing to diverse communities. The remaining four of these nine organisations gave answers that suggest the development of a plan is in progress. One states ‘strong aspiration through programmes, marketing and direct approaches’, while another states ‘we are working on an action plan in collaboration with strategic partners’ and ‘diversifying our offer’ through ‘inclusive projects’. The third organisation cited its ‘active schools programme’ that brings ‘a range of diverse children and young people including SEND schools’, while the fourth states ‘special needs training for staff and volunteers/special events for special needs’. These answers demonstrate that the will is there and some action has been taken, but there is yet to be a strategic implementation of plans and action.

Yes

Nine organisations answered yes directly and provided evidence of the actions that have occurred as a result of the strategy. Some of the common actions (mentioned by two or more organisations) include: representation in workforce and governance, physically and emotionally accessible venues, programmes for people with disabilities, marketing directly to diverse communities, equal opportunity policies, community ambassador programmes, staff training, and advertising jobs in specialist publications.

Some notable activity from individual organisations include:

- Including disadvantaged communities in decision making
- Using ‘plain English’ (accessible language) on website; training mentors and volunteers from diverse backgrounds
- Community Ambassadors Programme
- Developing special facilities (such as sensory and productive gardens) to provide work experience
- Developing a youth forum team
- Diversity as a standing item on the board’s agenda; working with partners to reach out to SEND schools; ensuring associate artists are diverse; programming events targeted at minority groups

One organisation states that it is delivering to the Arts Council England’s Creative Case for Diversity. This demonstrates that the organisation is viewing its inclusion and diversity action plan within the wider national context, and aims to reach the standards set by ACE. Another organisation writes that despite its strategy being in place it could be doing more. There are valuable efforts being made in many organisations towards becoming inclusive and diverse, and many stand-alone exemplar actions or good practices. It is the strategic ambition and implementation of inclusion and diversity throughout the organisation that will lead to sustainable change.

Q6: Do you monitor and evaluate the choices you make around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion? If so how? This can include paper, face to face, and online questionnaires, data collection through ticket purchase, evaluations for funders, on a project to project basis etc. etc.



Six organisations do not monitor and evaluate the choices they make around inclusion and diversity. Three of these six suggested that they will do so in the future.

One organisation states that it monitors attendance numbers for each project but does not officially monitor inclusion and diversity. Another states that it collects information at the ticket purchasing stage but this is ‘under review’.

Two organisations state that they evaluate their inclusion and diversity choices, but that the evaluation is not ‘formally monitored’ or evidence is ‘generally ad hoc’ and ‘often anecdotal’.

Eleven organisations say that they monitor their inclusion and diversity activity. Evaluation forms were the most popular method mentioned. One organisation states that it uses evaluation forms to collect, monitor and evaluate data, while another states that it ‘[monitors] attendance numbers to track engagement numbers year on year’ but does not state how. One organisation states that it started to use a survey to collect diversity data from audiences in 2019. This organisation will soon begin to use this method to collect employee data as well.

Three of these eleven state that they evaluate on a project to project basis. One adds that it has evaluation sheets for visitors, but ‘few fill them in’. This is similar to a comment by another organisation that states ‘the people who are willing to complete the questionnaires are not always diverse’, and seeks ‘balance between needing more information and respecting people’s privacy’. The evidence suggests that organisations are not finding it easy to capture accurate and consistent data.

The National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) supported by Arts Council England (ACE) are required to present data to their funders. One expanded on its actions resulting from its commitment to the ACE’s Creative Case for Diversity. It states ‘we have successfully recruited 1 new BAME Creative Courses Tutor’ (two out of ten of its tutors are BAME), and it conducts consultations with BAME and SEND audiences. It collects data on a regular basis using Audience Finder Surveys, and monitors ages 16 and under through booking registration forms. As a NPO it writes reports to ACE, reviewing its business plan in tandem with the Creative Case for Diversity and Equality Action Plan. Another NPO also mentions its quarterly updated equality action plan, relating to its commitment to the ACE’s Creative Case for Diversity. Here we see that the requirements of a funder can influence the efforts made towards measuring and understanding the impact that actions taken are actually having.

A fourth organisation (not a NPO) states that it monitors the ‘number of communities worked with’ through its ‘annual events board report’. While this answer does not provide the methods of evaluation used, it suggests that the organisation is diligent in monitoring the numbers of communities it works with and wants to measure the impact of its efforts towards inclusion and diversity.

Through an upskilling programme it runs with MK College, one organisation collects audience data which is then passed to the University of Leicester to evaluate. It affirms ‘each year we brainstorm the results of these evaluations to see how we can improve’. This answer shows good practice around self-monitoring and evaluation, as the organisation involves the community and gets skilled professionals to feed results back, which are then reviewed to advance the organisation’s inclusion and diversity work.

The evidence demonstrates that organisations are not finding it easy to capture accurate and consistent data and this is an important issue to take forward in our recommendations.

Q.7: Please provide a breakdown of the representation within your organisation for the following areas both as a percentage and in numbers. Please provide data from the last financial year. BAME; disability; LGBTQ; Gender; Age (0-24; 25-40; 41-60; 61-70; 70+); Education (educated to degree level or not).

Areas to cover:
Governance/Trustees; Leadership; Paid staff; Volunteers; Trainees/Apprentices; Freelancers; Contractors/Suppliers; Performers/Artists/Guest Curators/Speakers; Audiences

Information gathered from answers to question 7 aimed to capture the diversity of the audiences/visitors and workforce (including volunteers, trustees and freelancers), and to show the levels to which organisations monitor and evaluate their efforts to ensure diversity in these areas. However, like question 4, this question was a problem for many organisations in its expectations and request for detail, and it confirms again that monitoring and evaluation of inclusion and diversity are under-developed and inconsistent.

Sections of this question were skipped, or generic answers such as ‘total mix’ provided. Four organisations gave no answers at all and another three gave answers that were unclear or anecdotal such as ‘human’, ‘we work through others’, and ‘we often see engagement from some of the more underrepresented groups’. Two organisations stated that the information is not currently recorded and one of these relies on ‘teachers for data on school visits.’ Eleven organisations provided answers in percentages and/or figures for one, some or most of the areas stated.

Many organisations did not attempt to answer this question, presumably because it requires evidence that is not in place. Of those that did attempt to answer, few used robust monitoring and evaluation systems. While some could provide workforce statistics there were clues in the answers that these were partly estimates. Furthermore, very few organisations knew the make-up of their audiences. The figures that were submitted show that people from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds, people with a disability and people who identify as LGBTQ+, were not well represented in the paid workforce, volunteers or governance. In general, more females work and participate in the arts and heritage sector, but the governance of the sector is majority male. Most of the workforce are educated to degree level, and range in age between 25 and 70.

The detailed answers to question 7 are shown as Appendix D. The percentage outcomes and figures given in the tables did not allow any meaningful overall sector percentage to be presented. This underlines the need for a consistent monitoring and evaluation model that is easy to use and workable for all.

Q8: What barriers are you experiencing to achieving a diverse and inclusive workforce (including volunteers)?

Three organisations state that they experience no barriers to achieving a diverse and inclusive workforce. One said ‘no barriers’ and another said ‘none in particular’. The third one said ‘we particularly aim for this and haven’t found it hard’. Two organisations gave less direct answers, with one stating it ‘has no workforce of [its] own’, while the other asserts it ‘[welcomes and supports] anyone who wishes to engage as well as actively generating attendance’.



Fifteen organisations gave examples of the barriers they experienced to a diverse and inclusive workforce:

Six of these focused on issues within their own organisations such as ‘limited opportunities for volunteering and high costs to recruit using specialist resources’; ‘[relying] on those who volunteer’; ‘with sufficient funding we would want to offer training but it would be a challenge to get all volunteers (250) to engage’; being a ‘new organisation’ with ‘little money or time’; lack of opportunities seized to recruit during ‘formal engagement programmes and networking opportunities’; and ‘[breaking] out from the way we’ve always done things... re-educating staff and re-writing policies to achieve cultural change is not a quick fix’.

Three organisations gave examples of barriers that are founded in internal organisational choices/behaviours and external factors. One organisation states ‘lack of funding to move outside our core team’, but demonstrates awareness that this is a barrier, rather than not seeing it as a barrier at all. This organisation also states that it needs to ‘spend time with communities of interest’ and that more resources are needed to ‘nurture potential workers over time’ specifically those who see the arts as ‘other’. It also mentions that there is a need for some funders to understand that certain levels of education and experience ‘may not be appropriate’ for a truly diverse and inclusive workforce. Another organisation mentions that it does not ‘pay to advertise for jobs’ and that because ‘salaries in the arts are very low... they tend to attract more people who can afford that lifestyle’. It also states that ‘recruitment in MK is difficult because people don’t want to move here to work’. The third organisation states simply ‘commitment, time, transport’. Here, transport is an interesting comment as, similar to the last comment by the previous organisation, it highlights barriers incurred by the local infrastructure.

Six organisations relate barriers that they have experienced to the attitude and behaviour from the communities they attempt to engage with. One organisation states that because it is BAME-led it finds ‘other communities less engaging’. Another comments that it is ‘hard [to] recruit [young people] into governance’, while a third states the main barrier is ‘the assumption that this activity is not for them – that they are not invited’. Similarly, the fourth organisation states ‘[the] perception of what it is like to work here’. These four organisations see the perceptions that different communities have towards the roles offered and the willingness they have to participate in its work as barriers. The other three organisations identify features of the application process as barriers for communities. One states ‘very few applications for new posts’ and the second notes the challenge in ‘finding individuals with skillsets; attracting applications from the wider community’. The third states when recruiting people from diverse communities it has found that the ‘[understanding] of information required for a cover letter and CV is not quite there’ and that there is a ‘misunderstanding of what roles require’. It also asserts that most of its volunteers are ‘middle class/retired’, but it has identified this as an area to work on.

Key barriers to achieving an inclusive and diverse workforce relate to both internal and external factors:

- Lack resources (time and financial)
- Organisational behaviour (doing things as they have always been done)
- Funders’ and organisations’ expectations of the qualifications and experience applicants should have
- Applicants’ lack of knowledge of the requirements of the organisations’ roles
- Not receiving a variety of applications from diverse communities; or applications not delivering relevant skills, failing to impress at CV submission stage

- Low pay scales
- Communities’ perceptions of who the arts are for
- Lack of understanding of the local infrastructure
- Lack of networks and relationship building strategies by sector

Q9: What media, marketing channels, networks or other activities do you use to promote vacancies to the general public?

Three different strands of promotion were specified (below):

One organisation wrote that no part of this question was applicable to it.

1. Promoting vacancies to the general public: One organisation stated that this section of the question was not applicable to it, presumably because it is a newly established organisation and has yet to promote any vacancies. One other organisation did not answer this question, probably because it is volunteer led and does not advertise paid vacancies as such. Ten organisations mentioned non-specific channels such as: own websites and social media accounts; targeted websites and specialised organisations; ‘low cost and free’ online arts publications; agencies for some roles; print display within the organisation’s environs; newspapers; radio; flyers; and community networks.

The remaining eight organisations mentioned specific channels: Arts Professional; Monster Plus; Arts Jobs; Guardian Jobs; University of Leicester Museum Studies website; Jobs Desk; MK College HR team; MK Citizen; Destination MK. These channels embrace a mix of local and national reach. Cost is a factor for organisations when advertising, and the channels specified are all free for promotion. There are no specialised websites or communication channels identified by name that might specifically be used by diverse communities.

2. Promoting programming to the general public: Fifteen organisations offered non-specific channels such as: own websites and social media (using photographs, text, film and comedy to catch attention and inform); print; PR; radio; TV; newspapers; forums; mail shots to database; direct mail to arts and heritage project commissioners, referring organisations and staff; flyers, brochures, posters and leaflets; paid for social media sites; outdoor advertising; individual promotion; specialist PR; book bags; school book bags; community networks; face to face promotion. School book bags are notable as a means of communication which is local and (depending on the diversity of the school) the information might make its way into the households who would not otherwise be informed.

Five organisations specified channels by name: Parks Trust What’s On Guide; Three Counties Radio; MK FM; Get Smart (local brochure distribution); Facebook; and ArtLicks. This identifies the catchment area that the organisations focused on when attracting audiences, but it does not demonstrate concerted efforts to develop relationships with diverse communities through advertising.

3. Effectively target diverse communities and groups: Twelve organisations mentioned word of mouth, face to face promotion, and using direct or personal contacts. One of these twelve stated ‘visit the groups around Milton Keynes to see what their ambitions are and how they can get involved’. Two of these twelve use Community Ambassadors and two others use relationships built up over time. It shows that most of the organisations believe that direct contact with diverse communities is the best way to effectively target them. Deafzone, British-sign.co.uk and The Parks Trust What’s On Guide were the only specific channels mentioned by organisations to reach diverse communities. The Parks Trust Guide includes events for people with disabilities and people from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds and could be an effective way to reach these communities.



One Black, Asian and ethnically diverse led organisation states that it '[targets] audiences in the venue'. One organisation stated that it uses 'media accessible to all'. Three organisations did not give any examples, with two leaving the section blank, and another asserting that this area 'needs work'. These answers suggest that these organisations do not yet strategise specific media and marketing channels to effectively target diverse communities and groups.

Q10: Does the channel depend on the vacancy? If so why?

This question was asked in order to understand if or how organisations segregate their advertising according to whom they wish to attract to apply for paid and unpaid roles. For example, are volunteer, administrative or artistic roles advertised in arts and heritage publications only, or are they linked to pages like Deafzone and spread to Black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities by word of mouth through Community Ambassadors? Obviously, a targeted approach to advertising roles results in a narrow response, which can lead to exclusivity in the workforce and leadership, rather than inclusivity. Organisations will argue that in order to target people with certain skillsets it is necessary to advertise vacancies through particular channels, and, of course, the job should be awarded to the most suitable candidate. However, if the opportunities are not opened up more widely to diverse communities, then both the workforce and the sector remain exclusive and wider talent may be overlooked.

Three volunteer led organisations state that this question is not applicable to them. This is presumably because they interpreted the question as relating to paid roles, or it may be that they have not had a history of advertising for trustees and volunteers.

Eight organisations state or suggest that the channel does not depend on the vacancy. Six of these simply answered 'no'. The seventh states 'it more depends on finances', demonstrating that paid-for advertising affects the ability of organisations to publish vacancies through some specialised channels. The eighth organisation states that it has 'one (part time) paid post, fillable locally' and that 'trustees could be (but have never been) non-local'.

Ten organisations answered yes, the channel does depend on the vacancy. One of these simply confirmed 'yes', while all others added comments about skillsets requirements as the main reason for choosing certain channels. Some examples given are: 'a marketing vacancy [is shared] on social media but a teacher to work with special needs wouldn't seem appropriate to advertise on Facebook/Twitter'; '[a senior role] might also appear on the Guardian Jobs website'; '[a chef's role would go] into the catering journals. If it was specialist like Exec Director it would go into Arts Professional but Head of Operations paid for via LinkedIn'; and 'if we are looking to work with a particular person for our board we would look to MK companies, if we wanted to work with learning and disability we would send to specialist organisations'; '[we use a particular website] to attract trained specialists'. These comments, of course, demonstrate that organisations want roles to be filled by those with the appropriate skills and look to specific industry sites and channels to get people with these skills to apply. If these channels are not accessed by enough people from diverse communities, organisations need to find new channels of promotion and advertising. Furthermore, the Focus Group research conducted identified the lack of diverse representation in the sector as a barrier, so even people confident of their skills may hesitate to apply if not specifically reached out to.

Q11. Do you consider your organisation to be accessible? Think about website, programme, venue etc.

This question was asked both to prompt comment and consideration about how accessible the organisations are to diverse communities and to determine whether accessibility

audits have been carried out. Accessibility in this sense is about members of different communities truly feeling and thinking that the organisation is for them. That means all aspects of the organisation, not just the venue (for those that are venue-based) being physically, emotionally and culturally accessible.

Seven organisations say they have low levels of accessibility, being partly accessible, and/or with room for improvement. Comments include: 'not fully but we think about it deeply and are always trying to improve'; 'venue sadly not! Social media yes. Programme trying to get there'; 'we're getting there. More recent effort is being put into this'; 'this is something we are working on'; 'quite accessible but much more to do'; 'yes but there could be improvements'; and 'yes, with the exception of limited access to the first floor'. Some of these answers suggest that organisations are on a journey towards becoming more accessible, and that some advice and help is needed to move forward, perhaps in terms of an audit carried out with members of diverse communities.

Fourteen organisations answered yes, they do consider themselves to be accessible. Six of these stated 'yes', while two added the affirmations 'extremely'; and 'very much so'. Five of these thirteen expanded their answers further with comments such as 'the programme aspires to capture lots of different tastes and communities... we use subtitles, hearing loops, offer BSL talks, sensory tours, sensory maps. Just did a two-day conference on Art and Disability'; 'we are reviewing [accessibility] with industry expert Attitude is Everything'; 'it is physically accessible. There is very detailed information on the website'; 'accessibility to the development of [our venue] has been key'; and 'we review our accessibility when we review our evaluation'. The first of these five gives more information about the areas in which the organisation is accessible, which is helpful as it shows the efforts made. The other four comments show that accessibility is in review, with new efforts happening all the time. This suggests auditing takes place. Of course, regular auditing is good practice and helps improve the sector's accessibility. Communities' needs change over time and the sector must adapt.

Q12. Do you evaluate the impact of your programmes on diverse communities? If so how? If not, why not?

Eleven organisations answered that they do not measure the impact of their programmes, and various reasons were given by four, with one stating 'not formally', the second stating 'not yet as the strategies and plans are not yet developed', the third stating 'not specifically as yet, but this is in planning', and the fourth stating 'the more we apply for funding the more conscious we are that this is something we need to have in place'. These four comments demonstrate a growing awareness of the need to implement such measures, with the last one showing understanding of a financial cost if it is not in place. Another of these four states 'we are led by the community's diversity' which suggests that the community's diversity is considered when programming, but there was no evidence of formal evaluation of the impact of programmes.

Comments given by the other five of these eleven are: 'we only have one full time member of staff'; 'we have no wish to ask for personal information and do not have the resources to do so'; 'lack of resource and time stops us from doing this currently, we would love to do so in the future'; 'in part and anecdotal, due to time constraints and (sometimes) existential distractions'; 'we presently do not have the budget to facilitate this although we are aware that many members of these communities return again for future activity with us'; and 'I'm not sure how best to do this'. The answers from these seven organisations demonstrate that while some impact of programmes is measured in anecdotal terms, finances, time and know-how are the main reasons why the impacts are not formally measured.



Four organisations answer that they sometimes measure the impact of their programmes. One states ‘No, except on a project to project basis where we evaluate all aspects of the project and the experience and progress of volunteers etc.’; and another states ‘we do not evaluate impact on specific groups or protected characteristics, unless the programme is dedicated to a specific group’. These answers suggest that different projects can require this type of evaluation, and may be something that is enforced by funders. The third organisation states ‘yes, in as far as we can’ which suggests that it finds the consistency of gathering this information a difficulty. The fourth gives examples of evaluation tools like ‘word of mouth’ and ‘questionnaires for funders’, and adds ‘need to do more (always)’. This answer demonstrates that here, impact is also measured both anecdotally and formally, but like the previous answer it is not always measured consistently.

Five organisations state that they do measure the impact of their programmes on diverse communities. One of these just states ‘yes’. Two of these five give examples of how, such as ‘evaluation forms and interviews with the audience’; and ‘as part of our community ambassadors programme’. The final two of this five also provide examples, but demonstrate the extra lengths they go to in getting this information. For example: one states ‘we ask for comments and opinions. We record videos that interview people from different communities, asking random attendees what they liked and what they would like to see in the future’; while the other affirms ‘we use digital surveys, face to face paper surveys, social media, lessons learned and we are about to establish user groups’. Both also confirm that they evaluate all of their programmes, with one stating ‘whether it be mainstream or targeted’. These are the only organisations that claim to evaluate the impact of all of their programmes.

Q13. When you programme, curate and commission work: a) what questions do you ask your suppliers and funders about their efforts towards equality, diversity and inclusion? b) do their answers influence your decision about whether to work with them?

If contractors, suppliers and fundraisers do not work in inclusive and diverse ways, then accepting their work compromises the inclusivity and diversity of the organisations. By asking these questions of contractors, suppliers and funders and making decisions according to how the answers meet good inclusivity and diversity values, the organisation encourages good practice and upholds its principles throughout its structure and delivery.

Five organisations claim that this question is not applicable to them. Five organisations state or suggest that they do not ask questions of suppliers, making comments such as ‘we do not ask’ and ‘currently questions about equality and diversity are not asked of our visiting companies/suppliers of programming’. One organisation states that it is a) ‘hesitant to ask’ and that it b) ‘usually [doesn’t] ask/confront’. Making decisions based on financial solvency is a reality for organisations. Two gave answers such as ‘most of our suppliers would already be working in an inclusive way’, and ‘we work hard to enable the best experience... [our sound technician will] always enable a hearing loop, at Disability Awareness Day we provide sign language addition... [we are] a flat access area well enabling access for prams and wheelchairs’.

One organisation states ‘we carry out our own research, not necessarily relying upon anyone to tell us about [their efforts] themselves’. This answer implies that the organisation considers the inclusion and diversity efforts of its suppliers, contracts and fundraisers, but does not have a formal questioning process that it applies.



It is encouraging to see that eight organisations state that they do ask questions of their contractors, funders and suppliers, and the answers influence their choice to work with them or not. One of these eight states that it has ‘standard required questions’, and another states ‘yes to both [(a) and (b)]’. Comments from six include: ‘we always work with partners with shared ambitions about making work accessible’; ‘we have an ethical policy for funding that is shared with the board, but what it boils down to is whether something is deemed to have reputational damage. Some funding we will turn down’; ‘we talk to facilitators about their experience with working with wide ranges of ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds and use artists well experienced in these fields’; ‘we shop consciously in terms of sustainability and animal rights. We serve vegan and vegetarian beers and fair-trade coffee’.

The final two organisations show commitment to always asking these questions and making decisions based on the answers. One states ‘we would only approach funders who were interested in and aligned with these areas as this is our key area of work’. The other affirms ‘we question the research they have done about our organisation and make sure they believe in the organisation and its objectives... We have an artistic board to regulate the integrity of our programme... Our organisation believes in the whole package. We are not tokenistic. [We have] roots in diversity and inclusion’. These answers suggest that the inclusion and diversity principles run throughout these two organisations.

The sharing of good practice from the organisations above who have experience in setting high standards and expectations of equality, inclusion and diversity practice from suppliers, funders, and contractors is a key recommendation.

Q14. What support does your organisation need in order to make progress on its journey towards becoming an exemplar model?

Four options were given to organisations under the headings:

- Systems
- Processes
- Culture (behaviour)
- Other

One voluntary organisation states that this question is not applicable to it. Another volunteer led organisation states ‘we would need to employ staff to do this’.

One organisation answered that it is already receiving help and advice in each of these areas from Attitude is Everything. This type of development and help is vital to the sector, and some other answers focus on intra-sector working, which could spread the learning between organisations. Intra-sector learning and/or mentoring between organisations could help when resources are an issue for smaller organisations. Indeed, one smaller organisation answered ‘examples of good working models’ for each section, while another larger organisation asserts ‘we would benefit from best practice already implemented in other arts organisations for systems and processes’.

One organisation states ‘yes’ only for systems and processes.

Eight other organisations answered in the **Systems** section. Answers include:

- ‘joint working’
- ‘reporting after successful grant application’
- ‘MKC should transform to become more supportive. Funding should become less of a preoccupation’



- ‘Finance’
- ‘The required funding will enable us to make significant step changes’
- ‘Have a better policy’
- ‘Fully integrated CRM and marketing’

From these answers three themes emerge: joint working and learning from existing exemplar practice; creating different funding pathways and processes; and building new policies and systems.

Eight organisations answered in the **Processes** section as follows:

- ‘Help to recruit a more diverse board/core funding to give us time to nurture and explore exemplars and set new policies’
- ‘More staff training; share our training with other city-wide organisations’
- ‘Marketing, recruitment’
- ‘Recruitment’
- ‘If we had more time (fewer distractions) we could reflect more on direction’
- ‘Resilience’
- ‘More training’
- ‘Reporting after successful grant application’

From these answers organisations would like more help with recruitment, marketing, and resources, as well as learning from exemplar practices.

Eight organisations answered in the **Culture** section as follows:

- ‘A cultural strategy to become an appendix to the Organisational Strategy’
- ‘Share policy with everyone’
- ‘It’s important to have clear messages about dignity in the workplace for people with protected characteristics’
- ‘We have the energy, the ideas, the local contacts and the premises. AHA is supportive, ACE is remote, MKC should try to become helpful!’
- ‘To be welcomed by the key arts and heritage organisations across MK’
- ‘More acceptance’
- ‘We would benefit from training and facilitated workshops’
- ‘Advisors/specialists: a lot of behavioural ignorance is the cause of being unaware of proper terminologies around certain cultures etc.’

The themes that emerge from these answers are: a shared policy supported by local and national organisations, acceptance, and training.

Seven organisations answered in the **Other** section with five of these answering only in this section. Answers are as follows:

- ‘Funding’
- ‘More funding always!’
- ‘Finance. If we could offer bigger salaries we could attract a more diverse workforce... If we could put on programmes that rely less on ticketing we could diversify audiences... Time and money to develop [networks] further... Build stronger relationships with schools’
- ‘Training in leadership and fundraising’
- ‘More staff’
- ‘Time to build greater engagement, attracting more volunteer capacity’
- ‘Working with CIL on accessibility’



From these answers the main themes that emerge are: funding, building stronger relationships, training, staffing, working with local groups to understand access needs.

Thus, organisations would like assistance in the following areas:

- creating intra-sector working and learning
- building stronger relationships with communities
- creating different funding pathways and processes
- resources (time and money)
- building new policies and systems supported by local and national organisations
- recruitment and staffing
- training

Q15: Has this survey made you think differently about your organisation's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion?

Ten organisations said yes, while eleven organisations said no. Approximately half of organisations were not challenged by the survey to think differently about their approaches to equality and inclusion.

Q16. Do you have any other comments?

Eight organisations provided feedback on the survey itself with comments such as:

- ‘difficult to find time to fill this survey out’;
- ‘as a small voluntary group without funds or employees, many of the questions are not applicable but we do review our audiences’;
- the questions around categories, numbers and percentages are too detailed for smaller organisations’;
- ‘we had a very reflective discussion provoked by the survey... [we are] a small organisation – some questions require a greater granularity than we can currently provide’; and ‘some of this is difficult to answer because we are a theatre but we are also a school’.

Eight organisations provided comments about their approaches to diversity and inclusion. One organisation comments that it is ‘not complacent about [diversity and inclusion]’ and that it is part of its ‘ethos’. Another states that it wants to ‘build a closer relationship with [local] diverse populations’. A third notes it is now considering ‘strategically how to engage with audiences... and looking at targeted approaches to make people feel welcome’.

Three organisations state how the survey has given them a new perspective on their approaches to inclusion and diversity, including one that answered ‘no’ to question 15. These answers state:

- ‘our board diversity [should] be re-evaluated’;
- ‘it is not a current priority to ask funders or suppliers their views on diversity and could be going forward’; and
- ‘completing this survey has assured us we are on the right path ...we are always reviewing and critical about our approach and engagement in MK...MK’s [cultural sector] is still white [and] middle-class. We have diversity but it could be integrated much more in decision making. Quality leaders are needed to create depth and legacy’.

This latter comment relates to observations made by two other organisations calling for policy change at local level. They state: ‘if initiative and ideas are not supported they will cease emerging... [MKC] need to get real and help’.



Key Findings and Recommendations from the Sector Survey

The survey evidenced many examples of good practice. Some organisations are further ahead in their inclusion practice than others. The journey has begun but ambitions now need to step up. To be truly inclusive, the cultural sector groups should embed the challenge of inclusion and diversity across all aspects of their organisations to meet the ever-changing needs of, and to walk in the shoes of, our diverse population. This is an opportunity for the Milton Keynes cultural sector to work collectively to ensure our city leads the way on excellent inclusion and diversity practice.

Arts Council England, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Milton Keynes Council and Milton Keynes Community Foundation are all stating that inclusion and diversity are a priority, which underlines the imperative of ensuring the Milton Keynes cultural sector and our city are leading the way. The requirements of a funder brings a useful urgency to a programme of change, and to effective monitoring and evaluation.

Key Findings

- The levels of good practice and the range of engagement with inclusion and diversity vary considerably across the sector. The challenges are often underestimated; progress overestimated. The more the challenge is embraced, the more the scale of the change necessary to be truly inclusive and diverse becomes evident through everything from mindset to assumptions to language to process and procedures, as well as in programming, recruitment, marketing and communication and overall engagement.
- Organisations may believe they are open to all and all-embracing, but under-represented communities have expressed the importance of proactive targeted communication and being actively welcomed: e.g. invitations, postcode targeting, inclusive language and images.
- Organisations have varied capacity: some have no, or few, paid staff, and limited resources (time and financial). Some of them feel that this limits their potential to embrace a culture of inclusion and diversity and to deliver impact.
- But inclusion and diversity are important, not only to be relevant to the increasingly diverse communities of Milton Keynes, but also for the very survival of organisations.
- Monitoring and evaluation of inclusion and diversity of audiences, visitors, programming, workforce, volunteers and governance are under-developed. The evidence indicates that organisations are not finding it easy to capture accurate and consistent data to inform their strategies.
- Most of the organisations believe that direct contact with diverse communities is the best way to effectively target the audience and the workforce, but lack the appropriate networks.
- A lack of applications from under-represented communities for roles as paid staff, volunteers and trustees indicates a need to examine the unintended barriers of language, expectations of qualifications, skills and experience, the application process and lack of training opportunities.
- Some organisations are already setting appropriately high expectations of good inclusion and diversity practice from suppliers, contracted workers and funders.

Recommendations:

- Inclusion and diversity should be integral to core activity, rather than something to be developed alongside main activity. A project-by-project approach is fragmented and less sustainable. Strategic ambition for and implementation of inclusion and diversity throughout the organisation will lead to sustainable change.
- A commitment to inclusion and diversity should be a central ambition, regardless of capacity. Organisations have varied capacity: they may have no or few paid staff, lack time and resources or lack the confidence to embrace this challenge. By working together the arts and heritage organisations can support each other to develop the strategies for inclusion, which are key to survival and to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse citizens of Milton Keynes.
- Training should be a priority for leaders, staff, volunteers and trustees in order to develop awareness and understanding, knowledge and skills, to deliver inclusive leadership, an inclusive culture and a new approach to processes, procedures, use of language, marketing and communication.
- A shared programme of training across the sector would demonstrate a shared commitment and ambition to be an exemplar cultural sector and city.
- A inclusion and diversity monitoring and evaluation system should be developed for sector-wide use, easy to implement in order to set benchmarks, capture progress and impact, and deliver regular good practice audits to respond to the changing needs of communities.
- Good inclusion practice should be expected and encouraged from suppliers, contracted workers and funders to further the cause of inclusion and diversity. Those in the sector who are already setting these high standards need to share their good practice and value statements for tendering and commissioning.
- Active engagement by arts and heritage organisations with our diverse communities is essential. The should:
 - develop ownership and increase the accessibility and relevance of the arts and heritage sector for our diverse communities by addressing critical issues such as the perceptions of who the Milton Keynes arts and heritage offer is for.
 - build networks and relationships and have conversations about the meaning of culture and its relevance to diverse communities.
 - develop potential and talent: invite people from diverse communities to share their skills and experience and see how they could be part of the cultural workforce (paid and volunteer) and governance, with a particular focus on opportunities for young people.
 - explore new channels of promotion and advertising to reach people from diverse communities as potential audiences, visitors, employees, volunteers, and trustees.
 - invite people from diverse communities to support the development of good practice, such as doing a venue audit to identify accessibility barriers (both physical and emotional).
 - explore avenues for consultation, contribution, collaboration, and co-creation.

This is a long game if it is to be sustainable: relationships need to be built over time, trust needs to be earned. By working together we can share training, expertise, networks, challenges, successes, all leading towards best practice.



The Moral, Creative and Business Cases for Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion is about taking action to ensure that contemporary society in the UK is better represented in a range of spaces. An inclusive audience, workforce and governance are not only representative of a range of identities, but are spaces where diverse voices are equal and respected.

Diversity is the existence of differences between groups and individuals. These differences can be of race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations, and include individual personalities and preferences. This report highlights diversity in ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic deprivation, and age. However, diversity is as complex as the combinations of peoples' identities and this report does not attempt to address all aspect of diversity. An individual's identity consists of multiple, intersecting factors.

The moral or ethical case for diversity is values-based, and enshrined in law by the 2010 Equality Act. It promotes social justice and human rights, challenges prejudice, champions fairness and equality, highlights areas of discrimination and offers a platform for representation that accurately mirrors the needs of communities. The moral case underpins both the creative and business cases.

Arts Council England has more recently outlined the Creative Case for Diversity. It states, 'diversity and equality are crucial... because they sustain, refresh, replenish and release the true potential of England's artistic talent, regardless of people's background'. ACE believes that diversity and equality are vital to the overall health of the arts and heritage sector and also observes that 'diversity, in the widest sense, is an integral part of the artistic process. It is an important element in the dynamic that drives art forward, that innovates it and brings it closer to a profound dialogue with contemporary society.' <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/diversity/creative-case-diversity>. The National Lottery Heritage Fund guidance states, 'Inclusion is not just about removing barriers so that people can participate. It is also about creating a welcoming environment, where people feel that they belong. This should begin before visitors arrive at your site or take part in an activity.' <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/inclusion>.

Building audiences requires strategic organisation-wide action, ongoing meaningful dialogue through relationship building and high-quality targeted marketing. By becoming more diverse, arts and heritage organisations can embrace more possibilities for creativity and engagement with the stories they tell, and become exciting and relevant to cross-sections of society. The more diverse arts, heritage and its organisations become, the more relevant and meaningful they become to the multicultural and diverse society which they serve.

The business case promotes diversity as a driver of economic resilience and calls for arts and heritage organisations to be entrepreneurial and dynamic. Being a diverse arts/heritage organisation means communicating successfully with a range of audiences. It

means building partnerships and collaborations with many different constituents, based on long term goals. It requires being as creative as possible with your spaces, productions and resources so that you can create evolving points of entry to your organisation. Marketing expert Donna Walker-Kuhne states that this is an 'investment in the future' as you grow and build your audience and educate them on 'the importance and mutual benefit of connecting their lives to your institution.' Walker-Khune, D. (2015) 'Attracting diverse audiences'. <https://racc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Attracting-Diverse-Audiences.pdf>

This means creating welcoming and hospitable environments where people feel comfortable engaging. In terms of the arts and heritage sector, catering for a multicultural and diverse society can increase ticket buying audience numbers, gift-shop sales, advertising deals and grants from funders.

The moral, creative and business cases all justify the aim of achieving inclusive excellence. Indeed, the Museums Association states in its Valuing Diversity report that it is 'important for organisations to work with a combination of the three, and most importantly to make sure that this informs their organisational values, mission, behaviours and decisions.' <https://ma-production.ams3.digitaloceanspaces.com/app/uploads/2020/06/18145318/27072016-diversity-report1.pdf>

The moral, creative and business cases apply equally to the importance of representation in the paid and volunteer workforce and trustees. Each case deepens our engagement with different perspectives and enables us to achieve ethical, creative and business excellence at the heart of our organisations.



Consultation Group



Good Practice

Defining good inclusion and diversity practice allows us to imagine what a desirable inclusive and diverse cultural sector will look like. It inspires a vision for our action plan and its desired impacts. Looking out of Milton Keynes at other cultural organisations and artists that are leading the way in inclusion and diversity practices can awaken new possibilities. Taking inspiration from others can enable us to look beyond our own experiences towards new ways of working and alter the way we perceive our own capabilities. It can motivate us to think ‘if they can do it, we can do it!’ At the same time, it is important to document and build upon the good work already being done in Milton Keynes. This shows that our journey has already started, and encourages us to move towards new models of sustainable inclusion and diversity practice.

This section is broken into three parts:

- A) What does Excellence in Inclusion and Diversity look like?
- B) National Examples of Cultural Organisations Delivering Good Practice
- C) Milton Keynes’s Journey Towards Cultural Inclusion and Diversity

A) What does excellence in inclusion and diversity look like?

For an organisation to be **exemplary in inclusive excellence** means that it has cohesively, coherently and collaboratively integrated inclusion and diversity into the pursuit of organisational excellence. Inclusion and diversity are at the very core of the enterprise, and are not perceived as isolated initiatives. Thus, excellence in inclusion and diversity means a commitment to building and sustaining a working and participatory environment that affirms inclusivity in its leadership, workforce, volunteers, audience, policies, procedures, organisational structures, programmes, and partnerships.

Inclusion and diversity experts Pearn Kandola state that ‘within an organisation it’s vital to build relationships with others who are different to you, offering a fresh perspective and different outlook on ideas’ <https://pearnkandola.com/diversity-and-inclusion-hub/leadership/inclusive-leadership/>. Inclusive organisations accurately understand and effectively adapt to the social and cultural differences in which they operate. Understanding diversity, and **allowing your organisation to adapt in order to accommodate** it, is at the heart of inclusive excellence. This will not only be of benefit to the individuals involved, who will feel more included, but also to the organisation as a whole as it benefits from increased creativity and better decision making. In an inclusively excellent organisation **no strand of diversity is seen as more important than the other**, and the impact of intersectionality (the different identities that one person has such as gender, race, sexual preference and ability) is taken into account.

The path to inclusive excellence is a journey, and, because of the changing needs of communities due to social and historical contexts, the journey is continual. Any efforts made by organisations to be inclusive and diverse are to be valued and demonstrate awareness of inclusion and diversity practices. However, as an arts and heritage sector we will only achieve excellence in inclusion and diversity when we fully integrate an organisation-wide sustainable approach that meets the intersectional needs of a range of diverse communities. Even then it will be a constant process of becoming but, by



remaining relevant, up to date, and in tune with the changing world we can sustain ideas, links and relationships that enable inclusion.

The Milton Keynes rapidly changing population means that the sector needs to make a seismic change if it is to be truly inclusive of the range of communities and citizens that the sector serves. Greater efforts to connect with and listen to the experience of others will encourage more reflection on current practices, and create pathways for positive change. Together, we can make the Milton Keynes cultural sector a national example of inclusion and diversity, and give our citizens the sector they deserve.

B) National Examples of Cultural Organisations Delivering Good Practice

There are many national examples of organisations and individual artists that have good inclusion and diversity practice. Here, seven are highlighted. These seven were chosen because they evidence working with a range of diverse communities through invitation, collaboration, co-creation, co-producing, programming, sharing hidden stories and using open language that is relevant to and reflective of the experience of others.

1. NAME: ACTA Community Theatre

PLACE: Bristol

WEBSITE: <https://www.acta-bristol.com/>

ABOUT: ACTA creates a place where everyone’s story matters, where individual opinions and experiences count, and are valued by others. The company enables communities to share their stories, and engage audiences who rarely attend theatre, encouraging people to see theatre in a different way by making it relevant to, and reflective of their culture and life experiences. As well as creating positive change in individuals, raising aspirations and improving skills, confidence, self-worth and employability, ACTA’s projects bring quality community theatre to existing theatre audiences. ACTA engages people without privilege, who are not connected to the cultural life of Bristol – isolated older people; migrants; refugees and asylum seekers; vulnerable young people; people with disabilities; and people living outside the city centre.

2. NAME: The Albany, Deptford - ‘A home for stories from the margins, the mainstream and everywhere in between’

PLACE: Deptford, South East London

WEBSITE: <https://www.thealbany.org.uk>

ABOUT: The Albany is an arts centre and theatre that prioritises work involving people through participation and partnerships, presenting a huge range of events and opportunities across art forms and for all ages. Its programme puts its audience at its heart. Some of its current priorities are:



- Maintaining strong relationships with communities living in 21st Century South East London to unlock unheard voices
- Linking with African, Caribbean and Vietnamese communities
- Using intergenerational approaches to link older and younger people
- Programing family shows for those from diverse communities
- Developing work that is co-created with communities and audiences

The Albany's work has been recognised with a number of awards in the last 2 years including the first Hearts for Arts Award from the National Campaign for the Arts (Spring 2017), awarded to Meet Me at the Albany for its contribution to social cohesion in Lewisham; Best Social Enterprise at the Mayor of Lewisham Business Awards 2017; the Outstanding Attitude Award for innovation in access; the Time Out Love London Award for local culture (2017 and 2018); and the London Youth Award for arts and culture 2018 for Love2Dance. The Albany was the first Arts Centre to achieve Gold on Attitude is Everything's Charter of Best Practice. Its website details different ways to use access information online, and gives clear instructions of how those with disabilities can access the venue. Free tickets to carers are provided.

STAFF: The Albany's staff make-up is diverse and representative. See the Arts Council's Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case: A Data Report, 2017-2018 for more information:

https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Diversity_report_1718.pdf

3. NAME: Culture&

PLACE: Greenwich

WEBSITE: <https://www.cultureand.org/>

ABOUT: Culture& set up The New Museum School to provide one-year accredited traineeships developing diverse talent in arts and heritage careers, leading to an RQF Level 3 Diploma in Cultural Heritage. It is an independent arts and education charity formed in 1988 and based in London. Formerly known as Cultural Co-operation, it works in partnership with arts and heritage institutions and artists to develop programmes that promote diversity in the workforce and expand audiences. Its New Museum School programme, in collaboration with A New Direction, supported by the National Heritage Lottery Fund, is being delivered with English Heritage, Magnum Photos, Museum of London, National Trust, Keats House – City of London Corporation, Royal Collection Trust, Southbank Centre, William Morris Gallery – London Borough of Waltham Forest, Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery, London Metropolitan Archives – City of London Corporation, Bletchley Park Trust and Art UK

Through projects and collaborations like The New Museum School, Culture& is moving in a new artistic direction, working with contemporary artists, curators and collections in new and dynamic projects, engaging new voices and venues, embracing diversity in arts and heritage.

In 2018 Culture& commissioned a work by Racheal Ofori for her play 'Detangled', which explored gentrification of London's localities through black hair culture, and Jocelyn Pook's 'Hysteria' on the theme of mental health. In 2019 projects have included Cyborgs, which explored the boundaries perceived between human and non-human, or between races,

genders or classes. Additionally, The Memory Archives worked to animate the Culture& archives in collaboration with the London Metropolitan Archives and the Friends of the Huntley Archives. The project aimed to address key mental health, wellbeing and diversity issues, using archival material as a memory stimulating device in order to highlight the experiences of diaspora and cultural dislocation. Culture&'s well-established programme of public activities encourages high quality engagement with the world's rich and diverse cultural heritage, whilst promoting intercultural contact, dialogue and understanding.

4. NAME: Essex Cultural Diversity Project

PLACE: Essex

WEBSITE: <https://essexcdp.com/>

ABOUT: Essex Cultural Diversity Project aims to energise cultural diversity in arts and heritage by creating opportunities, stimulating participation and providing a focal point for the development, celebration and co-ordination of cultural diversity through arts and heritage activity. It operates through three strands: Projects; an Artist Commissioning Programme; and Talent Development. Projects are thematic and diverse, and promote shared stories of cultural heritage such as positioning the Windrush generation as pioneers of multiculturalism in England, and highlighting the role of Black, Asian and ethnically diverse women in the suffragette movement. The Artist Commissioning Programme looks at place-based work, shaped by partnerships and communities and focuses on a range of diverse communities and artists. The Talent Development strand is rooted in diversity and creates opportunities for artists and young people from diverse backgrounds to develop within particular fields. The scope of Essex Cultural Diversity Project is broad, commissioning and showcasing work from visual and performing arts as well as literature and heritage. The Project is a strong advocate for the ACE's Creative Case for Diversity, and was awarded NPO status for the first time in 2018.

5. NAME: Glasgow Museums

PLACE: Glasgow

WEBSITE: <https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums>

ABOUT: Glasgow Museums is part of Glasgow Life, a company (Culture and Sport Glasgow) set up by Glasgow City Council to run services formerly delivered by its Culture and Leisure Services department. The service operates ten venues across the City. Its outreach service is called the Open Museum and this specialises in taking museum collections beyond the museum walls and out into the community.

Glasgow Museums is able to draw on a range of quantitative and qualitative data collected on a regular basis, to help inform its understanding of community needs. It has established a number of 'cultural hubs' in neighbourhoods around the city. These provide a base for staff from museums, arts and community services to work alongside each other and with communities and will give Glasgow Museums increased insight into local needs.

It set up a Creative Café to bring people from across Glasgow Life and external city-wide partners together, to share ideas about Glasgow Museums' collections and their forward plans and to make new connections. Glasgow museums developed quality criteria to



emphasise it is a user-focussed service, and ask as a key question whether there are opportunities for audience/stakeholder involvement in proposals. To help with this, Glasgow Museums runs a Staff Ambassadors Programme to give opportunities for placements and mentoring in community contexts, and to include staff who work in finance and front of house. This initiative helps more staff to understand the value of working with communities as active partners and builds their capacity to do so. It increases staff understanding of what constitutes local need and gives staff access to tools to support higher levels of reflection. Glasgow Museums uses reflection to develop a culture that encourages people to be creative and take risks. It developed a series of 'Insight Cafés', short informal discussion events bringing a range of staff and community partners together to talk about a theme or hear a speaker. The Insight Cafés have helped to develop relationships and connections across sites and staff disciplines, exploring new ideas and forming communities of interest.

6. **NAME: Slung Low Theatre Company**

PLACE: Leeds

WEBSITE: <https://www.slunglow.org/>

ABOUT: Founded in 2000 Slung Low is an award-winning theatre company specialising in making epic productions in non-theatre spaces, often with large community performance companies at their heart. The company recently relocated to The Holbeck in Leeds: the oldest working men's club in Britain. They run the bar as a traditional members' bar and the rest of the building as an open development space for artists and a place where other companies are invited to present their work that otherwise might not be seen in Leeds. All work presented at The Holbeck is Pay What You Decide. Slung Low shares its resources (equipment, vehicles etc.) with artists who need them. In Autumn 2018 Slung Low launched a Cultural Community College based in Holbeck; a place where adults come to learn new cultural skills – from stargazing to South Indian cooking, from carpentry to singing in a choir – and all workshops, supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, are provided on a Pay What You Decide basis. Slung Low's recent job advert for a producer demonstrated use of inclusive open language. It said *'write us a letter, send us a video, or a voice memo - whatever you are comfortable with. Tell us what you might bring to the team, what you are interested in, what motivates you, why you think being a part of the Slung Low family is an exciting prospect and something that you fancy doing with part of your life... (if it's comfortable for you it would also be brilliant if you could fill in this equal opportunities monitoring found here, thank you please)'*. All employees of Slung Low (from the cleaner, to the producers and the artistic director) are paid the same wage p/a - £28,080, the average wage of the nation.

7. **NAME: Priya Mistry (pronouns: she/her or they/them)**

PLACE: Leicester.

WEBSITE: <http://whatsthebigmistry.com/>

ABOUT: Priya Mistry is a multidisciplinary artist, socially engaged practitioner and creative producer, straddling visual, performance and live art. Mistry uses concerns around mental health as a starting point for her projects and practice. She sees mental health as the common factor for those who have experienced exclusion and inequality because they embody other protected characteristics. Mistry's practice adds to discourse on topics of

mental health and neurodiversity, feminist politics, cultural and ethnic identity, sex and queerness, and engages in specific outreach practices with a range of diverse communities. It deconstructs language, exploring sensory/non-word based vocabularies such as the language of food, using these efforts as a strategy to connect with people and bring a diversity of voices together.

In dialogues with audiences, artists and producers, Mistry ensures that each person is asked about their access needs, and what can be done to make the situation more accessible. Sometimes this can be establishing a rapport and a real understanding of care to make the working space safe. Whenever possible, Mistry's work is shared across online platforms to make it more accessible. Mistry chooses to work with venues and partners that are proactive about accessibility, and in funding bids always includes an access budget. Transparency around budgets and payments is paramount to Mistry's way of working. Mistry has created a list of agreements that promise to create a respectful working environment. and shares them in all job roles advertises, and at the beginning of all working relationships.

C) Milton Keynes's Journey Towards Cultural Inclusion and Diversity

There is a lot of good practice in the Milton Keynes cultural sector that addresses inclusion (featured below). Different organisations are at different points along the inclusion and diversity journey. Some organisations focus heavily on one area of diversity and have achieved exemplary levels of practice in this area, but need to work on other areas. The good work done in areas of focus means that the learning from that part of the journey can be applied to other strands. Organisations who are not as far along as others can learn from those who have made greater strides. The sector and Milton Keynes citizens are on this journey together.

These examples are taken from the surveys provided, plus some recent updates.

- **Arts for Health:** Working with mental health has been a prime focus; extensive work with young people carried out; working towards inclusive exhibiting strategies.
- **Arts Gateway:** Seeks diversity in the MK LitFest programme; aims to include hard to reach audiences when programming MK LitFest; engages with community and faith groups and events such as Festival of Nations and the Cornerstone.
- **Big Shop Friday:** Recognises current gaps in audience demographic; established a new programme called The Elephant Room which works towards making the space more inclusive and accessible; works directly with marginalised artists to improve the issue of inaccessibility; incorporates an 'access budget' in funding applications; records and documents work to provide access to online audiences.
- **Bletchley Park:** Disabled access key to recent and future developments of the site; signed up to New Museum School, a year-long programme of traineeships that open up the arts and heritage workforce to the next generation of diverse talent; plan to instate pronoun named badges for workforce; in March 2020 collaborated with MKIAC on a digital light show that juxtaposed the geometry of Islamic art with Western maths and coding.
- **Inter-Action MK:** Uses uncomplicated language on its website and in its marketing and/or direct approaches to communities; ensures programmes and buildings are accessible; trains mentors who have suffered challenges to mentor other people with challenges; welcomes and supports volunteers from diverse situations; does not accept funding from organisations whose values do not align with inclusivity; developed a sensory garden at the Milton Keynes City Discovery site.



- **Milton Keynes Arts Centre:** Establishing project advisory groups reflecting the diversity of MK communities to manage programmes; taking positive action to increase representation of artists from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds; using data which advises on the demographic make-up of MK to make decisions about which marketing tools are most effective for diverse audience engagement; has a growing profile of primary schools participating in programmes; consults with marginalised audiences to shape future content; has an equal opportunities recruitment policy for staff; recognises and is addressing current gaps in representation on board of trustees.
- **Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre:** Currently focusing on experience programmes for people on the autistic spectrum; runs a sensory garden and a productive garden, providing work experience for the bereaved, young carers, challenged people; surplus food from the productive garden will be given to the Food Bank.
- **MK Gallery:** Venue designed with access in mind; has a changing places toilet (one of two in MK), there are push-pads on doors, lifts are double sized; accepts video entry for job applications; has a commitment to interview all applicants with a disability; commitment to diversity in all areas of programming; free access to exhibitions for MK residents on Tuesdays during charging exhibitions; free entry for carers across all programmes; learning programme works with families who have disabilities; sensory exhibition tours; offers BSL for talks and lectures; hard of hearing and audio described film screenings; relaxed film screenings with audio sensory adjustments; has an ethical policy for funding; programmes some work with diverse communities; board member with portfolio for diversity and inclusion; diversity is a standing item on the board's agenda.
- **Milton Keynes Heritage Association:** Hold talks and events of interest that relate to stories of diverse communities.
- **Milton Keynes Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture (MKIAC):** Board is inclusive and diverse; strategically reviews programme to ensure that it reflects diversity and inclusion; has a community ambassador's programme that connects with various strands of society; builds strong relationships with community partners such as MK College, schools and faith institutions; runs a youth forum team that takes part in the development of programmes and activities; conducts upskilling programme with MK College students to collect data from programmed events - this data is passed onto the University of Leicester to evaluate; conducts annual analyses of data results in order to improve inclusion and diversity.
- **Milton Keynes Museum:** Currently working on bids focusing on audience development with Black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities and increased access for people with disabilities; recent exhibitions have been pro-active in gender and ethnic diversity; access statement on website developed in partnership with MK Centre for Integrated Living; paths from the car park and to the café are wheelchair friendly; hosts an autism quiet hour, and has key relationships with the MK branch of the Autistic Society, SEND schools and MK Council Inclusion and Intervention Team; working with the Macular Society MK Support Group to address access for people with different visual needs and requirements; Education and Outreach Officer wrote up a case study for World Health Organization/Europe, Journal: Public Health Panorama entitled 'Understanding the Impact of Museum Practice when Engaging the Syrian Refugee Community in Milton Keynes'; future plans for development include support for the hard of hearing and visually impaired.
- **Milton Keynes Theatre:** Started a diversity working group with staff identifying recruitment, celebration campaigns (key dates in the diversity calendar such as Pride and World Mental Health Day), and an annual diversity survey as three main strands of focus; beginning to conduct an analysis of inclusion and diversity in its recruitment;

reviewing staff training and inclusion and diversity policies; open to learning from best-practice implemented in other organisations.

- **MÓTUS:** providers of high quality dance experiences; committed to upholding an Equal Opportunities Policy which values the diversity of all; encourages all sections of the community to participate in policy decisions; equality and diversity are central to programming and participation; works with a large database of schools and organisations; uses facilitators who have experience with a wide range of ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds; in 2019 curated *Fluid in Flight* dance showcase with 400 children from diverse backgrounds, which generated a very diverse audience in MK Theatre.
- **Pagray Dance:** promotes and creates Indian Kathakali dance. Working towards clear inclusion and diversity strategies for recruitment and marketing.
- **Stantonbury Theatre:** Hires the venue to diverse communities which brings in a diverse audience.
- **Stonywords:** Aims to include young people through programming, and has recently focussed on a young audience from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **The Cenotaph Trust:** Works with larger partner The Parks Trust to support diversity and inclusion; programme is led by the diversity of MK and inspired by Pillar engravings at the Milton Keynes Rose. Trustees work in conjunction with community groups to support diversity in Milton Keynes and at The Milton Keynes Rose, including Disability Awareness Day, World Refugee Day, World AIDS Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day; enables hearing loops and includes sign-language interpreters at larger events; has a flat access area enabling prams and wheelchairs.
- **The Music Hub:** Working on a policy for diversity and inclusion; reviewing its offer to become more inclusive
- **The Parks Trust:** Actively operates a Community Ambassadors' programme, working with diverse communities to improve community confidence and use of MK parks; staff have undergone training in diversity and other areas such as dementia, disability and mental health awareness; works closely with communities to host diverse events and festivals by providing free training and one to one support; runs sessions that are more inclusive such as dementia friendly sessions and 'Discovery Strolls' aimed at strollers, wheelchair users and people with lower mobility; reviewing accessibility of parks and expanding communications; has representation on its board; works on developing a more diverse workforce and volunteering team.
- **The Play's The Thing:** In September 2019 held a festival 'Taking the Stage: Women in the Performing Arts', investigating gender power structures in theatre practice; working with artists with disabilities; uses BSL interpreters for such events.
- **The Stables:** Undertaking an intense 2-year programme developing the accessibility of the venue and programme; appointed a Community Inclusion Project Manager; received funding to become an exemplar for venue and festival accessibility; has a quarterly updated equality action plan; reviewing its marketing, venue, and programme with an intense programme of training and organisational enhancement with industry expert Attitude is Everything; has established an Access & Inclusion Advisory Board; is building in trigger warnings in all risk assessments; assesses each event for audience suitability; creating more opportunities for the disabled community (artists and audiences); appointed Jenny Sealey, Director of the Graeae Theatre (which works with deaf and disabled actors) to be artist-in-residence for the 2021 International Festival (IF).



Demographic information for Milton Keynes

The data for this section are taken from:

- The Office of National Statistics 2011 Census <http://mkinsight.org/mki-data/uploads/2016/11/DC0001113-Borough2011CensusProfile.pdf>
- The updated local authority information on Milton Keynes <https://www.ons.gov.uk/geography/local-authority/E06000042>
- The National Statistics School Census January 2020 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

The 2011 Census national average referenced in the table below is that of England rather than the U.K. The next census is due March 2021.

	Census 2011	Office of National Statistics
Overall population in MK	248,800 (50.52% women)	268,607
Under 16	22.3% (18.9% national average)	(0-15) 23.1%
Over 65	11.1% (16.3% national average)	13.8%
Average age	35	38
Black, Asian and ethnically diverse	26.1% (13% in 2001) National average in 2011 was 20.2% <i>The School Census 2020 shows that 48% of pupils in Milton Keynes are from a Black, Asian and ethnically diverse background</i>	n/a
Those with a health condition	n/a	23.4%
Health Issues that limit day to day activity	6.4% (8.3% national average)	n/a
Unpaid carers	8.8% (10.2% national average)	n/a

LGBTQ+: The census does not provide information about this community, with the Office of National Statistics reporting that it is difficult to collect accurate data for local LGBTQ+ communities. This may be because some people are tentative about disclosing their gender or sexual preference. While these reservations around disclosure make it is difficult to gain accurate knowledge about the local LGBTQ+ community, MK Council’s Equality Officer has anecdotally reported that the attendance at local LGBTQ+ events and festivals suggests that there is a proportionally large LGBTQ+ community in Milton Keynes.

Deprivation: Deprivation is not included in the table above as it is broken down in a different way, and instead the information about deprivation in Milton Keynes is included in the following paragraph. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019) state that there are seven areas in Milton Keynes that are amongst the 10% most deprived areas for child poverty (ages 0-15) in the country. More than 75% of all children in poverty are in households where at least one person is working (children in poverty in non-working households is estimated at 4,900)

Although there has been a low rate of unemployment in Milton Keynes, 4.8% (8,640) are unemployed, 85.3% (108,986) of those employed are service sector, 12.3% (15,740) are in elementary occupations, and approximately 4.4% (4,306) are unemployed adults with dependent children (Census, 2011). So, there is a significant portion of the population in Milton Keynes that is on lower levels of income. Furthermore, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation confirm that child poverty in Milton Keynes is high (seven areas in the top 10% nationally).

Black, Asian and ethnically diverse: Milton Keynes is a growth town with an increasing population and increasing diversity. The 2020 School Census shows that 48% of pupils in Milton Keynes are from Black, Asian and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Disability: a person is considered to have a disability if they have a self-reported long-standing illness, condition or impairment that causes difficulty with day-to-day activities. This definition is consistent with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Government Statistical Service’s \(GSS’s\) harmonised definition](#).

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/improvingdisabilitydataintheuk/2019>

The number of people reported in 2011 to be living with disabilities in Milton Keynes was 6.4%. slightly below the national average. There are many more people who care for those with a disability.

This data demonstrates the diversity of Milton Keynes and provides a numerative benchmark for organisations to achieve in terms of becoming representative of the local community in governance, paid and unpaid workforce roles and audiences.



Arts Council England Diversity Statistics for National Portfolio Organisations (NPO'S) 2018/19

All data taken from <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-creativity-and-culture/diversity>

In 2019 the Arts Council England (ACE) released diversity statistics for the 750 National Portfolio Organisations (both arts and heritage) it funds. These NPOs are leaders in their areas, with a collective responsibility to protect and develop our national arts and cultural ecology. Public investment brings public accountability, for ACE and for the organisations it invests in.

ETHNICITY	Artists	Managers	Specialist	Other	Total
White	41%	76%	59%	59%	52%
White other	8%	7%	7%	8%	8%
BME	17%	9%	10%	9%	13%
Prefer not to say	4%	3%	4%	6%	5%
Not known	30%	5%	20%	19%	23%

AGE	Artists	Managers	Specialist	Other	Total
0-19	1%	<1%	<1%	2%	1%
20-34	29%	19%	31%	43%	34%
35-49	25%	46%	30%	20%	25%
50-64	11%	30%	15%	15%	14%
65+	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%
Prefer not to say	4%	1%	2%	3%	4%
Not known	27%	3%	19%	12%	20%

GENDER IDENTITY	Artists	Managers	Specialist	Other	Total
Female	39%	60%	58%	51%	47%
Male	41%	37%	32%	37%	38%
Non Binary	3%	<1%	<1%	3%	2%
Prefer not to say	2%	<1%	1%	2%	2%
Not known	15%	2%	8%	6%	10%

DISABILITY	Artists	Managers	Specialist	Other	Total
Disabled	4%	6%	5%	5%	5%
Non-disabled	50%	79%	66%	63%	58%
Prefer not to say	7%	6%	5%	10%	8%
Not known	39%	8%	24%	22%	29%

LGBT	Artists	Managers	Specialist	Other	Total
LGBT	7%	9%	8%	7%	7%
Straight	37%	65%	50%	47%	44%
Prefer not to say	12%	11%	10%	14%	13%
Not known	44%	14%	32%	31%	36%

Disciplines:

- Dance has the highest BME workforce at 18%. Museums has the lowest at 6%.
- Museums has the highest percentage female workforce at 57%, Music has the lowest at 32%.
- Visual Arts has the highest percentage of disabled people in the workforce at 8%. Dance has the lowest at 3% of the workforce identifying as disabled.
- Theatre and Visual Arts had the highest percentage of LGBT workforce at 9% in each discipline, and Museums has the lowest LGBT workforce 3%.



Audiences:

Of the overall NPO portfolio audiences: 12% responded yes to 'disability limited a little/a lot', 16% of audiences described their ethnicity as BME and 64% of audiences were female.

Conclusion

These figures demonstrate the long way there is to go nationally for the arts and heritage sector to achieve diversity. Chair of the Arts Council Sir Nicholas Serota states 'these figures have confirmed that Arts Council and the organisations [it invests] in are still not representative of this country as a whole. The long-standing issue of under-representation in both the Portfolio and the Arts Council has to be recognised and addressed'. https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/ACE_DiversityReport_V11_1.pdf

The figures show the inequalities that exist in the arts and heritage sector nationally, and create an opportunity for Milton Keynes to become an exemplar city for cultural diversity, leading the way in this area.



Open Garden, Katie Ellen Fields and MK Snap.

Appendices

A. Terms of Reference for Consultation Group 2019/20

Background

The Arts and Heritage Alliance Milton Keynes (AHA-MK) is commissioned by, and working in partnership with, Milton Keynes Council's Economy and Culture team to develop a Milton Keynes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for the Cultural and Creative offer of Milton Keynes, its cultural workforce, volunteers, participants and audience.

AHA-MK is acting as project lead with their Programme and Partnerships Manager as lead officer.

This research will address the inequalities in what is perceived as mainstream British culture and the resulting Action Plan will provide pathways for the MK cultural offer to reflect and celebrate the diversity of the communities.

The three key areas for the project are:

- Share best practice and experiences
- Map the evidence
- Shape the future

The three key outcomes for the project are:

- To understand the barriers, challenges and gaps in current provision in relation to diverse communities
- To provide a report that maps the evidence of need
- To produce the Action Plan that is the starting point for future development and measurement

The wellbeing, creative futures and participation of young people in the life of the Milton Keynes will be a central focus for this project.

It is envisaged that this is a two stage project:

- Phase 1, Research, leading to an Action Plan, is the remit of this current project.
- Phase 2, Implementation, would seek funding to work with the arts and heritage sector to deliver significant change.

Purpose of Consultation Group

These terms of reference relate to the relationship between the project delivery team (AHA-MK), its strategic funding partner Milton Keynes Council, and the Consultation Group of cultural and community leaders who lead on the different strands of diversity present in Milton Keynes. The Consultation Group has been invited to guide, support and inform the creation of the Action Plan with its goal to set out the direction of travel to achieve equality of representation within the city's cultural and creative offer, workforce (paid and voluntary) and its audiences and visitors. The Group shares a vision for Milton Keynes where everyone has the opportunity get involved in arts, heritage and creativity through employment, volunteering, participation and attendance.



The Consultation Group will act as a ‘critical friend’ and collective ‘Think Tank’ to support the project delivery team to gain valuable insights into the needs of their members and communities throughout the project life span. The Group will bring different insights to and perspectives of the different diverse stands that they represent and access to networks and groups fundamental to this project and its focus on the workforce, volunteering, participation and audience.

Group members agree to:

- attend meetings to discuss progress
- share best practice, experience and networks
- support the organising and marketing of focus groups and provision of venues
- give feedback, challenge and advice
- identify accessibility challenges and help in accessing and building trust in communities
- promote activity, events and other opportunities via social media and networks
- act as Cultural Champions/ passionate role models
- review insights, recommendations and action plans

Values

The Consultation Group will work together and

- treat information with confidence
- look for the collective benefits
- remain committed to the project through a senior representative
- demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Meetings

The group will meet at key points during the project, to be determined at each meeting. A Rotating Chair will be drawn from members of the groups (excluding AHA-MK and Milton Keynes Council).

Duration of Project Stage 1: Developing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
July 2019 to August 2020

Communications

Notes of the meeting will be created and shared with the Group

Review

The Group will regularly review its effectiveness

Current Membership

Milton Keynes Council:

Cllr Jenny Marklew, Portfolio Holder for Culture

Cllrs Carole Baume replaced Cllr Marklew as Portfolio Holder for Culture in 2020

Pam Gosal, Head of Economy and Culture

Fiona Boundy, Creative and Cultural Manager

AHA-MK:

Elizabeth Howard, Programme & Partnerships Manager and Project Manager for this Action Plan;

Francesca Skelton, Chair AHA-MK

Gamiel Yafai: Diversity Marketplace Director and Consultant to this Project.

Other members:

Julie Dawes: Events and Community Engagement Manager, The Parks Trust

Disha Hedge, Youth Cabinet Chair (joined February 2020)

Diana Hatton: Director, Inter-Action MK

Darshana Jagatia: Trustee MK Hindu Association and Principal at solicitors Ray, Borley, Dunkley

Mike Kasibo, Global Outreach and co-founder of African Diaspora Festival

Peter Kingham, Chair Q:alliance (joined February 2020)

Roz Mascarenhas, Youth Cabinet Leader at Milton Keynes Council

Linda McComie, Treasurer Citizens MK, with connections to the Chinese community.

Kurshida Mirza: Organiser of Great Get Together Iftaar; Strategy Manager at Homes and Communities Agency (1999-2016).

Ranjit Singh, Philanthropy Manager, MK Community Foundation

Terms of Reference agreed October 2019

B. Questions asked to focus groups

1. What does the term ‘culture’ mean to you?
2. What does the term ‘cultural activity’ mean to you?
3. What cultural organisations can you name in Milton Keynes?
4. Have you ever used/attended any of these organisations?
5. Which of these organisations have you attended and why?
6. Are you aware of other activities that these organisations might hold? Such as education programmes, cafes, talks, music nights (gallery) etc.
7. Which of these would be of interest to you?
8. How do you/would find out about events that happen in these organisations?
9. Are you aware of any promotional material for these organisations?
10. Where would you find this material?
11. Do your friends talk about these activities/organisations?



12. What would encourage you to go to these organisations more? (Children’s activities, programme of interest to community, friends working there, knowing and hearing more about it etc.)
13. How would you like to receive information about the organisations and the activities they hold?
14. What types of roles do you think are available in these organisations? (trustees, volunteers, paid work, etc.).
15. Would you consider applying for a job at these organisations? Why?
16. How do you find out about job roles usually?
17. How should these organisations advertise these roles to your community?
18. What else can these organisations do to encourage more people from your community to apply for positions there?
19. Do you think it is important for your children to access these roles?

C. Arts and Heritage Sector Survey Questions

1. What does ‘culture’ mean to you and your organisation?
2. Where would you consider your organisation to be on the journey towards becoming an exemplar organisation in terms of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?
 - Level 1 Inactive: No D&I work has begun; diversity and a culture of inclusion are not part of organisational goals
 - Level 2 Reactive: A compliance mindset; actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures
 - Level 3 Proactive: A clear awareness of the value of D&I; starting to implement Equality, Diversity & Inclusion systemically
 - Level 4 Progressive: Implementing Equality, Diversity & Inclusion systematically; showing improved results and outcomes
 - Level 5 Best Practice: Demonstrating current best practice in Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; exemplary for other organisations globally
3. Why did you choose that answer?
4. How do the various strands of your organisation reflect the diversity of Milton Keynes communities. Please give answers in both figures and percentages and with particular reference to the categories provided. Key figures from the 2011 census can be found here: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/statistics/census>
 - Programming; Audiences; Workforce (including volunteers); Leadership; Governance
5. Do you have a strategy and/or action plan to widen access and remove barriers to engagement, and/or what active measures have you put in place in the choices you make? Examples of areas where active measures have been taken could be: marketing, welcomes, outreach activities, physical and emotional accessibility, financial choices, programming, staffing etc.

6. Do you monitor and evaluate the choices you make around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion? If so how? This can include paper, face to face, and online questionnaires, data collection through ticket purchase, evaluations for funders, on a project to project basis etc.
7. Please provide a breakdown of the representation within your organisation for the following areas, both as a percentage and in numbers. Please provide data from the last financial year. BAME; disability; LGBTQ; Gender; Age (0-24; 25-40; 41-60; 61-70; 70+); Education (educated to degree level or not).
 - Governance/Trustees;Leadership;Paidstaff;Volunteers;Trainees/Apprentices; Freelancers; Contractors/Suppliers; Performers/Artists/Guest Curators/Speakers; Audiences
8. What barriers are you experiencing to achieving a diverse and inclusive workforce?
9. What media, marketing channels, networks or other activities do you use to:
 - promote vacancies to the general public
 - promote programming to the general public
 - effectively target diverse communities and groups
10. Does the channel depend on the vacancy? If so why?
11. Do you consider your organisation to be accessible? Think about your website, programme, venue etc.
12. Do you evaluate the impact of your programmes on diverse communities? If so how? If not, why not?
13. When you programme, curate and commission work: a) what questions do you ask your suppliers and fundraisers about their efforts towards equality, diversity and inclusion? b) do their answers influence your decisions about whether to work with them?
14. What support does your organisation need in order to make progress on its journey towards becoming an exemplar model?
 - Systems;Processes; Culture (behaviour); Other
15. Has this survey made you think differently about your organisation’s approach to equality, diversity and inclusion?
16. Do you have any other comments?



D.Details of the Answers Provided for Question 7 in the Sector Survey

The percentage outcomes and figures given in the tables did not allow any meaningful overall sector percentage to be presented. The answers to this question are included as an appendix as they underline the need for a consistent monitoring and evaluation model that is easy to use and workable for all.

7. Please provide a breakdown of the representation within your organisation for the following areas, both as a percentage and in numbers. Please provide data from the last financial year. BAME; disability; LGBTQ; Gender; Age (0-24; 25-40; 41-60; 61-70; 70+); Education (educated to degree level or not).

- Governance/Trustees;Leadership;Paidstaff;Volunteers;Trainees/Apprentices; Freelancers; Contractors/Suppliers; Performers/Artists/Guest Curators/Speakers; Audiences

a. Ten organisations provided figures for **governance/trustees**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">BAME: 70%; 20% (1); 20%; 6 % (1); 9%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%. (Approximately 13.9% of governance is BAME).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disability: 20%; 18%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%. (Approximately 4.2% of governance is disabled).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LGBTQ+: 50%; 20%; 11%; 10%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%. (Approximately 10.1% of governance is LGBTQ).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender: Male – 70%; 70%; 60%; 58%; 55%; 50%; 45%. Female – 55%; 50%; 45%; 42%; 40%; 30%; 30% (six organisations provided these figures. Approximately 58.3% of governance is male, 42.7% of leadership is female)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Age range: 25-70; 25-70; 25-70; 25-70; 41-60; 41-70 (six organisations provided these figures. Governance largely covers ages between 25 and 70).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Education: 100% degree level; 100% degree level; 100% degree level; 100% degree level; 80% degree level; education unknown (six organisations provided these figures. Approximately 80% of governance is educated to at least degree level).

b. Eight organisations provided figures for **leadership**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">BAME: 100% (1); 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%; 0%. (Approximately 14.28% of leadership is BAME).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disability: 100% (1); 100% (1); 0% (4); 0% (2); 0% (2); 0% (1); 0% (1) (seven organisations provided these figures. Approximately 33% of leadership is disabled).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LGBTQ+: 100% (1); 50% (2); 0% (2); 0% (1); 0% (1); 0% (1) (six organisations provided these figures. Approximately 25% of leadership is LGBTQ).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender: Male – 50% (1); 50% (1); 100% (1) :Female – 100% (1); 100% (1); 100% (1); 50% (1); 50% (1) (six organisations provided these figures. Approximately 33% of leadership is male and 77% of leadership is female).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Age range: 25-40; 25-60; 41-60; 41-60; 61-70 (five organisations provided these figures. Leadership ranges between 25 and 70).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Education: 100% PhD level (1); 50% Masters degree and 50% BA degree level (2); 100% degree level (2); 100% degree level (1); 100% degree level (1) (five organisations provided these figures. Approximately 100% of leadership is educated to degree level).

c. Seven organisations provided figures for **paid staff**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">BAME: 50% (1); 6% (1); 0.02% (2); 0%; 0%; 0% ; 0%; 0% (Approximately 8% of paid staff are BAME).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Disability: 3; 6% (1); 0%; 0%; 0% (five organisations provided these figures. Approximately 1.2% of paid staff are disabled).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">LGBTQ+: 50% (1); 0.008% (1); 0%; 0%; 0%; 0% (six organisations provided these figures. Approximately 10% of paid staff are LGBTQ).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender: Male – 50%; 50%; 37.5% (6); Female – 100% (1); 100% (1); 62.5% (10); 50%; 50% (five organisations provided these figures. Approximately 27.5% of paid staff are male, 72.5% of paid staff are female).



<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age range: 25-70; 25-40; 25-60; 25-60; 25-70 (five organisations provided these figures. Paid staff range between 25 and 70).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education: 100% degree level (2); 100% degree level (1); 20% degree level (1); 0% degree level (2) (four organisations provided these figures. Approximately 55% of paid staff are educated to degree level).

d. Eight organisations provided figures for **volunteers**:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BAME: 40.5% (9); 25% (3); 20% (5); 12% (4); 8.4% (21); 5% (11); 2; 0%. (Approximately 15.13% of volunteers are BAME)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability: 48% (12); 8% (8); 4%(4); 3.6% (9); 0%; 0%; 0%; 0% (seven organisations provided these figures. Approximately 8.6% of volunteers have a disability).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LGBTQ+: 2.4% (6); 0%; (unknown) (three organisations provided these figures. Approximately 2.4% of volunteers that disclose their sexual preference are LGBTQ).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender: Male – 55% (138); 50% (1); 40% (13); 40% (10); 9% (1); Female – 91% (10); 60% (20); 60% (15); 50% (1); 45% (112) (five organisations provided these figures. Approximately 38.5% of volunteers are men; 61.5% of volunteers are women).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age range: 25-40
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education: 100% degree level; 54.5% degree level; unknown; unknown (four organisations provided these figures. Approximately 38.5% of volunteers are educated to degree level).

e. Two organisations provided figures for **trainees/apprentices**. One of these organisations (BAME led) provided figures for BAME only, while the other provided BAME and gender. As the test group is very small for this category, the overall percentages have not been calculated.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BAME: 80-90%; 50%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender: 100% Female

f. Three organisations provided figures for **freelancers**. As above, not all areas were answered by each of these three, leaving the test group very small. Thus, the overall percentages have not been calculated.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BAME: 60% (94); 30%; 17% (1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability: 8% (12)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LGBTQ+: 20% (31)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender: Male- 40% (62);Female - 100%; 60% (94)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age range: 25-60; 25-60
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education: 100% degree level

g. No organisations provided any figures for **contractors/suppliers**.

h. Three organisations provided figures for **performers/artists/guest curators/speakers**. One of these stated ‘as above in freelancers’, another provided figures for BAME only, and the third begins with ‘[it] varies’ and provides approximate figures rather than collected data.

i. Four organisations provided figures for **audience**, with one of these providing approximates. Therefore, the figures provided by that organisation have been left out of the table below. The other three organisations did not provide answers for each area. Again, the size of the test group means that overall percentages have been omitted from the table below. Nine other organisations stated, or suggested, that they do not collect monitoring data from their audiences.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BAME: 30% (341,715); 18%; 5.3% (18)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability: 9.8% (87); 5% (56,952);
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender: Male – 31.7% (247); Female – 67.3 (525) ;Other 1% (8)





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