



Community
Foundation

Tyne & Wear's Vital Issues 2017

Arts, Culture and Heritage

Arts, culture and heritage

1.1 Overview

Tyne & Wear has a huge range of arts, culture and heritage assets. Its creative sector centred on Newcastle-Gateshead continues to prosper despite the impact of significant cuts to public expenditure.

1.2 Size of the creative sector

An indication of the size and growth of the creative sector in Tyne & Wear is given by figures for the % of Tyne & Wear's workforce employed in creative industries:

Table 6 - % of workforce employed in creative industriesⁱ

	% workforce employed (2013)	% workforce employed (2015)
Gateshead	3.07	3.65
Newcastle	2.64	3.47
South Tyneside	1.52	1.34
North Tyneside	1.34	1.88
Sunderland	0.92	1.35
Tyne & Wear	2.04	2.59
National	3.02	3.1

Clearly Gateshead and Newcastle are at the epicentre of things, but it is interesting to compare the current size of this sector within the sub-region with more traditional areas of employment such as shipbuilding (.11%) or banking (2.74%).

A further indication of the economic fortunes of the arts, culture and heritage sector is given by the independent economic impact reports produced by Newcastle Gateshead Cultural Venues, which comprises 10 key organisations¹ running 20 venues devoted to visual arts, performing arts, music, film, writing and literature, dance, heritage and archives and science communication. The table below summarises some of the key indicators from these:

Table 6 – Contribution to the NE economy of 10 Newcastle Gateshead Cultural Venuesⁱⁱ

	2012	2014	2016
Total economic contribution to NE economy	£77.6m	£85.8m	£87.3m
People directly employed	1233	1251	1296
Attendances	3.6m	3.3m	3.8m
Combined turnover	£53.6m	£55.8m	£62.2m
Value of local procurement	£19.8m	£34.9m	£20.3m
Project funding secured	£5.9m	£3.2m	£4.6m

1.3 Tyne & Wear's arts, culture and heritage assets

The Grant Thornton Place Analytics cultural amenities score dates from 2012 and measures the spatial concentration of sports arenas; cinemas; zoos; theme parks; major event venues; Visit England attractions; Michelin starred restaurants;

¹ Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art and Baltic 39 (visual arts); Centre for Life (science centre); Dance City (national dance agency for North East); Live Theatre (new writing theatre); Northern Stage (producing theatre); Seven Stories (national centre for children's literature); Sage Gateshead and Gateshead Old Town Hall (music performance and learning); Theatre Royal (receiving and touring theatre); Tyneside Cinema (independent cinema); Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (9 museums, galleries and heritage sites, plus the area archives)

performing arts venues and cathedrals. It shows that Tyne & Wear scores highly, with all areas being well above the national average:

Table 7 – GTPA Cultural Amenities scoresⁱⁱⁱ

	National	T&W	Newcastle	Gateshead	S.Tyneside	N.Tyneside	Sunderland
Score	100	416.9	838.3	242.6	471.0	315.1	282.9
Percentile		12.2	12.4	32.2	21.3	26.7	28.2

It is notable that theatre density in Tyne & Wear is 4th best in the country, placing it at the 7.6 percentile. The sub-region also appears to be well endowed with heritage sites and listed buildings, the latter concentrated in Newcastle.

There is, in addition to these larger assets, a multiplicity of buildings, artefacts and public spaces that embody the historic legacy of Tyne & Wear. Preserving these in times of austerity is a major challenge, and there is a multiplicity of community organisations contributing to the preservation of these smaller heritage assets. The Tyne & Wear Heritage Forum comprises over 30 organisations working in this field, and is an excellent source of information on the work being undertaken in this area on projects ranging from the preservation of the historic Carter's Well in the centre of Low Fell, Gateshead to the relocation of the Killingworth Locomotive Sculpture^{iv}.

1.4 Public engagement with arts, culture and heritage

Levels of participation in the arts within Tyne & Wear have traditionally been low, with the North East having the lowest rate of all the English regions. The Department for Culture Media and Sport's "Taking Part" survey provides some useful data on regional trends in the % of respondents participating in arts, culture and heritage activity since 2013 and some key figures are included in the table below:

Table 7 – Taking Part Survey data on participation^v

Area of participation	2013 NE (National)	2014 NE (National)	2015 NE (National)
Has engaged with the arts 1+ time in past year	73 (78.4)	76.4 (77.5)	73.7 (76.8)
Has visited a heritage site 1+ time in past year	74.9 (72.7)	77.6 (72.5)	77.3 (72.6)
Has visited a museum or gallery 1+ time in past year	52.7 (52.8)	52.6 (53.1)	52.2 (52)
Has visited a library	38.2 (37)	34.1 (35.4)	34.6 (34.5)
Has digitally participated in culture in past year	33.9 (43.5)	29 (37.8)	29 (37.8)

In the absence of sustained progress in most areas, there is clearly a case for continuing efforts to widen participation. Aside from the benefits to individuals, this is key to improving the sustainability of our arts, culture and heritage sector in a tight funding environment. There are several strategies currently being employed to address this:

- Promoting the arts generally to everyone, including studies to identify the barriers to involvement.
- Civil society using arts and culture as a tool in their work. This would not only be a vehicle to address specific issues and target groups, but an opportunity to encourage those furthest from engaging involved, including volunteering.
- Targeting opportunities at the most excluded groups so as to ensure they are not overlooked. This may involve smaller specialist participatory arts organisations

working in partnership with local groups with the focus on their needs rather than a particular art form. But there are also good examples of larger institutions extending their reach, such as Sage Gateshead's In Harmony project.

1.5 Art and social change

Art is a powerful tool for transforming both individuals and communities. Personal development through arts activity can be about building confidence, aspirations and skills.

For communities it can be about creating and expressing shared collective identities, and enabling a diversity of voices to be heard within a community. The arts can also challenge and change perceptions, an important part of building community cohesion.

Whilst the focus of giving should be mainly about supporting local groups to use art as a means of achieving their aims, there may be an argument for being more strategic and allowing a more long term and carefully considered approach at community level covering cohesion, community of place and capacity building. Participatory arts organisations able to do this have a long history of engagement with local groups.

Potential roles for philanthropy

- Newcastle and Gateshead is doing relatively well in relation to this theme, and philanthropic activity could usefully focus on helping to close the gap by supporting more projects elsewhere in Tyne & Wear.
- Widening arts participation should remain a priority for local philanthropy, ensuring that all people in Tyne & Wear benefit from its amazing arts, culture and heritage assets.
- The role of the arts in helping to transform individual lives with charitable funding - particularly for those facing the challenges of poverty, deprivation or disadvantage - remains crucial.
- Philanthropic approaches can help to increase diversity and participation in arts funding. Newcastle City Council established the Newcastle Culture Investment Fund at the Community Foundation in 2014, to use money for arts and culture activity to address the health and wellbeing of local residents. The fund makes grants of £600k per year, notably for core costs, and has provided a stimulus to the sector. It has also become a 'seal of approval', helping the sector to secure additional resources from national funders.

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- ⁱ <http://gt-placeanalytics.com> (subscription service). The figures are from the Business Register and Employment Survey
- ⁱⁱ **ERS (2016)** NGCV, *Economic Impact Assessment, 2015 – 2016* at www.NGCV.tv
- ⁱⁱⁱ <http://gt-placeanalytics.com> (subscription service)
- ^{iv} See <http://www.twhf.co.uk>
- ^v See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey>