Disadvantage and cultural engagement – a study in to the lives of young Londoners

Report of findings: February 2015 - Final

A.N.D — A new direction for arts, culture and young london

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Executive Summary

Introduction and background to the research

1. A New Direction's (AND) mission is for all young people in London to have the best cultural education and freedom to be creative, regardless of their circumstances and socio-economic background. As part of its mission, AND launched its Cultural Capital Inquiry into inequality of access to arts and culture for children and young people in London. This inquiry explores the idea – sometimes referred to as 'Cultural Capital' – that engagement in arts and culture through childhood contributes to becoming a well-rounded individual, better able to access opportunities and navigate choices.

2. Previous research and work by AND, including through the Strong Voices programme, highlighted that engagement in arts and culture, particularly outside of school, is lower among disadvantaged young people.[1] Government research has also identified that disadvantage, especially multiple disadvantage, is linked to lower attainment and fewer positive outcomes.[2] Consequently, AND wished to conduct research to better understand the lives of disadvantaged young people and their interaction with, and the barriers to accessing, arts and culture. The aim is to use this research to encourage organisations and individuals providing cultural education to reflect on their existing practice in engaging with disadvantaged young people and to think about ways in which their offer can be shaped to overcome some of the barriers highlighted by this study.

3. The research was conducted on behalf of AND by Public Perspectives Ltd, a social research organisation, in partnership with Middlesex University. Public Perspectives are the lead partner, with Dr. Ben Little, Senior Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies, Middlesex University providing specialist support and expertise.

Approach to the research

4. A qualitative research approach was adopted involving in-depth interviews and small group discussions, alongside a rapid literature review and auto-ethnographic techniques. The fieldwork took place throughout January and February 2015. Overall, 26 interviews or small group discussions were held, involving a total of 51 young people from a range of backgrounds across London.

5. The research focussed on four key groups that face life circumstances that could be described as disadvantaged: Disabled young people; Young people at risk of offending or gang activity; Young carers and Looked after young people.[3]

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[1] A New Direction worked alongside four other Arts Council Bridge organisations to develop Strong Voices, a national programme funded by the Department for Education, which works with vulnerable and disadvantaged 13-19 year olds that have traditionally been excluded from engaging in arts and culture.

[2] The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, 2011 (NatCen).

[3] This research is fully aware that these groups represent only part of the picture of 'disadvantage' and that each group is not necessarily homogeneous – with multiple types and varying degrees of disadvantage.

Key findings

6.   The following is a summary of the key findings established by the research:

The complexity of disadvantage

The rapid literature review highlights that the concept of 'disadvantage' is complex, contested and arguably politicized. Consequently there is not a consensus amongst policy makers and practitioners about how to define and tackle disadvantage. There are common issues and barriers in general and to accessing arts and culture experienced by young people regardless of their disadvantage. However, there are also issues and barriers experienced that are specific to different types of disadvantage faced by young people. This has implications for policy and practice in that a one-size fits all approach may not be appropriate in trying to engage young people facing different types of disadvantage.

The challenge of building cultural capital and the importance of starting from what young people are interested in

The rapid literature review also highlights that using the term 'cultural capital' is problematic in that it is a concept originally attributed to Pierre Bourdieu who employed this to describe how cultural literacy helps confer status, sustain elites and legitimise social hierarchies. He did not necessarily refer to it in the way it is being used today by some organisations (i.e. that engagement in art and culture through childhood contributes to becoming a well-rounded individual, better able to access opportunities and navigate choices).[4] For Bourdieu, cultural capital cannot be easily acquired. It is generated through a combination of domestic and educational environments but it is extremely difficult to produce artificially as it is largely transferred in the home.

In such a way culture and arts organisations should be careful of using cultural capital as a concept for justifying intervention in the lives of disadvantaged young people as it could be understood as simply bolstering the privilege of those with mainstream cultural capital. There is also an associated risk of exposing a young person to new and different forms of art and culture which they may feel are not for them and are thus alienating. In practical terms, using the term cultural capital needs to be accompanied by a clear definition, while an emphasis on starting with the forms of creative practice young people are already involved in will help overcome the danger of alienating them.

The importance of strengthening social capital

The rapid literature review, alongside the primary research, highlights that it is important to focus on strengthening social capital, as well as exposing young people to new and different forms of art and culture. Social capital involves strengthening social relationships, support networks and developing personal and transferable skills. The process of building social capital can take time. Where there is an absence of social capital, perhaps in the form of a lack of family or friendship ties or a lack of support from school or other organisations, it is difficult to develop and sustain an interest in new and different art and cultural activities. This suggests that for cultural education programmes to be effective, they need to build social capital by working with families and their existing peer groups, not just the young people in isolation. They also need to work with young people over a period of time, delivering high quality cultural education programmes that allow them to explore and sustain an interest in new and different

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[4] Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. "The Forms of Capital." In Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education, edited by J. Richardson, 241–58. New York: Greenwood.

forms of art and culture, alongside valuing and strengthening those they might already be interested in.

The lives of young people in London – a sense of feeling excluded

The young people in the research tended to lead active lives, pursuing a range of interests and activities, including creative activities. However, most experienced barriers which prevented them from pursuing their interests as much as they would like. Consequently, some young people said they felt 'excluded' from what London has to offer and what they felt some other young people in London are experiencing.

The following represent the key barriers specific to each group of young people engaged. The importance of family members or positive adult role models helping to expose young people to activities and sustain interest and involvement is a common theme:

Disabled young people

- Reliance on family members to facilitate access to activities
- Activities tend to be on their own or with other disabled people, creating a sense of exclusion

Young person at risk of offending

- Lack of family support to expose to new and different activities and sustain interest and involvement
- Negative peer influences which encourage negative behaviours
- Concerns about personal safety which mean that some young people do not want to leave their local area

Young carer

- Lack of family support as family members are focussed on their caring roles
- Lack of time due to caring commitments
- Lack of money as caring commitments affect the capacity of the family to generate income

Looked after young people

- Lack of family support
- Chaotic and unstable lives due to being moved around and emotionally unsettled

The barriers to engaging in arts and culture

The above issues are barriers to engaging in all forms of activity, including arts and culture. There are also some barriers which are more specific or prevalent to the arts and culture.

The concepts of 'art and culture' do not resonate with some young people. This is because, in their minds, they evoke images of more traditional art and cultural forms, which are not always relevant to their lives. This also reinforces their impression that 'this is not for someone like me'. This perception is reinforced by the way that the arts are presented in some schools, as uninspiring, limited and not relevant to the lives of some young people.

Another important barrier is a lack of exposure to, and support to participate in, cultural activities from families, peers and school. The young people that seemed most engaged had initially been exposed to it by their families and then subsequently supported to further explore that interest. Where there was a lack of interest or a lack of engagement, this was often accompanied by a lack of exposure. The only exposure they had was through school – both

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lessons and occasional school trips. However, the school trips tended to mainly be at primary school so some young people had very little exposure once they were of secondary school age.

Some young people also said they do not visit or participate in cultural activities as they would have no one to go with, although they themselves might be interested. This is partly practical as they think it would be more fun to go with other people. But they also do not want to feel like the 'odd one out' or 'miss out' on what their friends are doing.

Key issues for consideration

7. By way of conclusion, this research has identified some potential strategic, policy and practical issues for consideration. In general terms it is important to point out that AND and other organisations in the sector are already addressing some of these issues. The findings of this research back up many of the findings in AND's previous research and provide further justification for the work of AND. However, this research identifies both potential tweaks to existing programmes and more substantial issues for AND and the sector to consider. Some of these issues are natural conclusions based on the findings of the research, while others have been inspired by the suggestions made by the young people in the research. The potential issues for consideration are as follows:

Ensure that cultural education programmes build on and strengthen social capital: This research has highlighted the importance of utilising and strengthening social capital alongside valuing and strengthening art and cultural activities that young people are already interested in. There are two aspects to this, which are fundamental to the subsequent recommendations in this report. Firstly, cultural education programmes are more likely to gain initial traction if they start working with young people in settings they are already engaged in and with art and cultural activities they are already interested in. Secondly, these programmes are more likely to have a sustained impact if they help build the structures and support for young people to pursue their interests, such as strengthening family and friendship ties and helping develop the skills of young people.

Deliver a holistic approach, encompassing families, peers and early intervention: Linked to the above, one of the key findings of this research is that family support is almost fundamental to exposing a young person to art and culture (or indeed any given activity) and helping sustain and develop their interest. Similarly, peer influence is an important driver of the activities and interests that young people engage with. In addition, it is important to engage with young people as early as possible before any negative behaviours such as offending or gang activity become ingrained. This suggests that cultural education programmes should adopt a 'whole family' and 'Peer-based' approach, targeting young people in their early teens and younger.

Work alongside organisations that are already engaging with disadvantaged young people: Linked to the above points, culture and art organisations and programmes will struggle to effectively engage disadvantaged young people and sustain their interests if they try to engage them independently. They need to work with organisations (schools and youth agencies) that have already established relationships with young people and already have the support structures in place. This way cultural and art organisations and programmes can build upon existing social capital, exposing young people to culture and arts, developing their skills, and hopefully sustaining their interest with cultural, artistic and creative opportunities. This approach has already been adopted in the Strong Voices

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programme and this research suggests that such an approach could be continued and extended.

Start with what young people are interested in and involve them in designing programmes: Not all young people are immediately interested in art and cultural activities or are aware they might be. Similarly, even where they are interested and already engaged, some young people do not necessarily relate to the words and traditional connotations associated with 'art' and 'culture' and can feel that such activities are not for them. Simply exposing some young people to these more traditional forms of art and culture, without any initial groundwork, might alienate them. Young people define art and culture in the broadest of ways and want activities that are relevant to them and their lives. In order to find an approach that will resonate with young people, they need to be involved in designing, developing and even delivering programmes. Such an approach also has the added benefit of creating social capital through the skills and confidence that young people develop by being involved in designing and potentially delivering programmes. Once that initial interest has been generated and young people have been supported to develop their cultural interests, they can subsequently be exposed to different forms of art and culture which may not initially have been relevant to them.

Deliver community outreach programmes: Young people face a range of barriers that prevent them from accessing art and cultural activities. These include financial and geographical barriers, as well as deeper barriers about whether the activity is 'for people like me?' and 'will I be the odd one out if I take part in this activity?'. Some young people in the research said they think activities should be brought in to their schools and youth clubs/organisations. For example, specialist workshops on specific activities such as graffiti or tattoo art, drama or music workshops or community theatre. They felt this would give them a chance to be exposed to, and explore their interests in, different activities. In addition, providing funding or discounted access to cultural and artistic activities would also make it easier for young people through their schools or clubs to participate in such activities. Again, this approach has already been implemented to some extent through the Strong Voices programme, but could potentially be enhanced.

Support schools to deliver high quality cultural education: Children and young people often experience arts and culture for the first time through school. This is perhaps more so the case with some disadvantaged young people where there may be a lack of family support. No doubt many schools provide excellent cultural education. However, several young people in this research said their experience of cultural education in schools was not positive. Similarly, it seems that some schools are not prioritising cultural education. Very few young people in the research had gone on a school trip while in secondary school to a cultural and artistic attraction. Likewise, young people that wanted to pursue their creative interests in school are often prevented from taking more than one cultural/artistic subject at GCSE level. Understandably schools are under tremendous pressure and have a wide range of priorities, however, there is scope to share good practice and support schools to place greater importance and priority upon cultural education.

Make use of social media to promote and deliver cultural education programmes: This research is not the first to identify the heavy use of social media amongst young people, of all backgrounds. They not only use it to communicate with friends and family, but also to find out information and pursue their interests, including cultural and artistic interests such as listening to music, making music and publishing on YouTube. Many are

engaging in cultural and artistic activities without knowing it, such as making gaming videos and uploading to YouTube or ensuring their photos on Instagram look curated and visually appealing. Cultural and artistic organisations, and no doubt many already are, need to be engaging with young people in this space. This is not just simply about promoting cultural and artistic activities, but also delivering cultural education programmes in this space.

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Disadvantage and cultural engagement – a study in to the lives of young Londoners

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Main Report

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction and background to the research

1.1 A New Direction's (AND) mission is for all young people in London to have a great cultural education and freedom to be creative. It is committed to connecting children, young people and education with the best of London's arts and culture. This includes ensuring that exposure and access to culture and the arts is equitable to all young people regardless of their circumstances and socio-economic background.

1.2 As part of its mission, AND has recently launched its Cultural Capital Inquiry into inequality of access to culture for children and young people in London. This inquiry explores the idea – sometimes referred to as Cultural Capital – that engagement in art and culture through childhood contributes to becoming a well-rounded individual, better able to access opportunities and navigate choices as you get older. And, in more simple terms, understanding which children and young people are engaging in arts and culture and which are not, and the possible barriers to engagement.

1.3 In addition, A New Direction worked alongside four other Arts Council Bridge organisations to deliver Strong Voices, a national programme funded by the Department for Education. A New Direction led on London delivery and partnered with London Youth and their member youth clubs to work with vulnerable and disadvantaged 13-19 year olds that have traditionally been excluded from engaging in arts and culture.

1.4 Recent research conducted by AND highlighted that engagement in arts and culture, particularly outside of school, is lower among disadvantaged young people.[5] AND's 'My Culture, My London' ethnographic research also explored the engagement of young people with arts and culture in London, including barriers to engagement.[6] The 'My Culture My London' research highlighted that the barriers can be broadly divided between 'rational' barriers (time, money, distance) and deeper barriers relating to the nature of the emotional reward that young people get from taking part and their sense of identity. It is possible that many of these barriers and issues are relevant to all young people regardless of their circumstances. However, it is also possible that there are barriers specific to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and their life circumstances.

1.5 The rapid literature review which forms part of this research (see appendix 1), identified a large number of studies which focus on disadvantaged young people in general, but less on the specific relationship between disadvantaged young people and their relationship with art and culture. Consequently, AND wished to conduct research, in the context of its Cultural Capital Inquiry to better understand the lives of disadvantaged young people and their interaction with culture and the arts.

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[5] Cultural engagement by young Londoners: an introduction to key trends, drivers and challenges, July 2013 (A New Direction) / Cultural Capital Quantitative Survey, November 2014 (A New Direction)
[6] My Culture, My London, November 2013 (A New Direction)

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1.6   The research was conducted on behalf of AND by Public Perspectives Ltd, a social research organisation, in partnership with Middlesex University. Public Perspectives are the lead partner, with Dr. Ben Little, Senior Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies, Middlesex University providing specialist support and expertise.

Aims and objectives of the research

1.7   The overall aim of the research was to better understand the lives of disadvantaged young people and their relationship with culture and the arts. In turn, the aim is to then use this research to encourage organisations and individuals providing cultural education to reflect on their existing practice in engaging with disadvantaged young people and to think about ways in which their offer can be shaped to overcome some of the barriers highlighted by this study. The specific objectives or information needs of the research could be summarised as:

- Understand the lives of disadvantaged young people, the challenges, the issues, the opportunities (or lack of) and the impact these have on the aspirations of young people and the economic, emotional, social, educational and cultural dimensions of their lives

- Understand how disadvantaged young people define culture and the arts and the role that it plays in their lives, including their current interaction with culture and arts and its importance to them

- Identify the barriers disadvantaged young people face in accessing culture and the arts

- Discuss ways in which these barriers can be overcome and how culture and the arts can better engage with disadvantaged young people

The complexity of disadvantage

1.8   The rapid literature review conducted as part of this research highlights that the concept of 'disadvantage' is complex, contested and arguably politicized. Much of the literature may not explicitly define itself through the lens of "disadvantage", instead it might focus on poverty, deprivation, social exclusion, class, specific named difficulties and so on. Related to this, it is not always clear whether the issues identified are related to a specific disadvantage, a combination of disadvantages or socio-economic background. This has implications for both policy and practice when engaging with so called disadvantaged young people in that a one-size fits all approach may not be appropriate in trying to engage with young people facing different types of disadvantage.

1.9   It also has implications for the way in which this research was conducted. In order to make the research work in practice, it has focussed on four key groups that face life circumstances that could be described as disadvantaged. The rationale for choosing each one is based on incidence, relevance of the group for London, the degree of complexity of their situation and where arts and culture is likely to sit in relation to that (see appendix 1, the literature review, for an outline of the rationale for engaging with each group):

- Disabled young people
- Young people at risk of offending or gang activity
- Young carers
- Looked after young people

1.10   This research is fully aware that the above four groups represent only part of the picture of 'disadvantage' and does not specifically target many other types of disadvantage and young people facing different circumstances in their lives. Equally, this research is aware that each group is not necessarily homogeneous – with varying types and degrees of

disadvantage experienced within each group. In addition, it is aware that some young people face multiple disadvantage and their circumstances may mean that they fit in to more than one disadvantaged group, as was the case with several of the participants in this research.[7]

1.11 However, each group is worthy of this initial research investigation, given the circumstances that can be experienced by young people within those groups. This research explores these issues and challenges and the role of culture and the arts within their lives through a qualitative research perspective, providing insight which has not necessarily been gathered previously.

1.12 In some cases this research has identified findings which are specific or exclusive to one of the four groups. Where this is the case, this is clearly spelt out. However, most of the findings are relevant to all or most of the groups. Where this is the case, it is possible that these overarching findings are not only relevant to the four groups under research here but also young people experiencing other forms of disadvantage not covered by this research.[8]

The concepts of cultural and social capital

1.13 The rapid literature review also highlights that the concept of 'culture' is complex and contested, especially between the more narrow traditional definition of 'High culture' and the idea of culture as part of everyday life. The latter definition is arguably more powerful in identifying ways to engage disadvantaged young people in arts and culture i.e. there is a need to build on their existing cultural and creative activities to gain their initial interest and so as not to alienate them when they are exposed to new or different forms of art and culture. At the same time there is also an idea expressed by some academics and policy makers that rests on an implicit notion that some forms of art and culture do benefit individuals and society. This view suggests that creating 'cultural literacy' will enhance the social mobility of young people facing disadvantage by helping them better articulate themselves, access opportunities and navigate choices as they get older. This idea has similarities with the concept of 'Cultural Capital' being explored by AND in its inquiry.

1.14 However, using the term 'cultural capital' is problematic in that it is a concept originally attributed to Pierre Bourdieu who employed this to describe how cultural literacy helps confer status, sustain elites and legitimise social hierarchies. He did not necessarily refer to it in the way it is being used today by some organisations (i.e. that engagement in art and culture through childhood contributes to becoming a well-rounded individual, better able to access opportunities and navigate choices). For Bourdieu, cultural capital cannot be easily acquired. It is generated through a combination of domestic and educational environments but it is extremely difficult to produce artificially as it is largely transferred in the home.

1.15 In such a way culture and arts organisations should be careful of using cultural capital as a concept for justifying intervention in the lives of disadvantaged young people as it could be understood as simply bolstering the privilege of those with mainstream cultural capital. There is also an associated risk of exposing a young person to new and different forms of art and culture which they may feel are not for them and thus alienating them. In practical terms, using the term cultural capital needs to be accompanied by a clear definition, while

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[7] The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, 2011 (NatCen), identified that at least 15% of young people may face 2 or more forms of disadvantage; this tends to have a more significant impact on young people and society. As they state: "Whilst the experience of a single disadvantage can create difficulties for young people, multiple disadvantages can often interact and exacerbate one another, leading to more harmful and costly outcomes for both the young person and society as a whole." p.75

[8] Common risks and issues experienced by young people with different forms of disadvantage are also noted in the The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, 2011 (NatCen),

an emphasis on starting with the forms of creative practice young people are already involved in will help overcome the danger of alienating young people.

1.16 The rapid literature review, alongside the primary research, highlights that it is important to focus on strengthening social capital, as well as exposing young people to new and different forms of art and culture. Social capital involves strengthening social relationships, support networks and developing personal and transferable skills. The process of building social capital can take time. Where there is an absence of social capital, perhaps in the form of a lack of family or friendship ties or a lack of support from school or other organisations, it is difficult to develop and sustain an interest in new and different art and cultural activities. This suggests that for cultural education programmes to be effective, they need to build social capital by working with families and their existing peer groups, not just the young people in isolation. They also need to work with young people over a period of time, delivering high quality cultural education programmes that allow them to explore and sustain an interest in new and different forms of art and culture, alongside valuing and strengthening those they might already be interested in.

1.17 The findings of this research are consistently placed within these concepts of social and cultural capital.

Approach to the research
Qualitative in-depth interviews and small group discussions with auto-ethnography and rapid literature review

1.18 A qualitative research approach was adopted for three main reasons:

- The target group (i.e. disadvantaged young people) are a niche group and difficult to engage with in large numbers, therefore a qualitative approach which targets smaller numbers in a more in-depth way is most appropriate

- The subject matter is potentially quite sensitive, discussing the personal lives of young people, which again lends itself to conducting qualitative research to allow us to explore sensitively yet in detail the lives of young people

- AND has already conducted a reasonable amount of quantitative research and the research aims and objectives lend themselves to a qualitative technique which allows us to explore issues in-depth

1.19 Within the field of qualitative research there are a number of different approaches which could be adopted. Our approach was to conduct a combination of in-depth individual or small group interviews alongside using auto-ethnographic techniques. The in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals or small groups of friends/peers. This approach allowed us to spend a significant amount of time, exploring in-depth and comprehensively the subject matter, with a relatively large number of young people across the four target groups i.e. providing both breadth and depth (see below for a full breakdown of the young people engaged).

1.20 In addition, any approach is always strengthened by using more than one method. Consequently, we also used some 'auto ethnographic' techniques to provide a different perspective, allow participants to engage in a different way and importantly produce information which has allowed us to create easily digestible research outputs. The research participants were asked to prepare a short video about their lives and interaction with culture and the arts, which have been reviewed and subsequently edited in to a short film to help portray the story of the research.

1.21 In addition to the above, we conducted a rapid literature review of theory and evidence around the lives of disadvantaged young people and their engagement with culture and

the arts. This was conducted at the outset of the project to help inform the design of the research materials and act as a reference point at the analysis and reporting stage. The review was led by Dr Ben Little, Senior Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies, Middlesex University.

1.22 The fieldwork took place throughout January and February 2015.

Participant profile

1.23 In total 26 interviews or small group discussions were held across the four key target groups, involving a total of 51 young people. 19 of these young people participated in the 'auto-ethnographic' part of the project. Effort was made to engage with a mix of young people in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and geography within London.

1.24 The breakdown of the participant profiles is as follows:[9]

Group	Profile/details
Disabled young people	▪ 5 in-depth interviews and 1 small group interview (involving 3 young people) with young people including physical and mental disabilities[10] ▪ 5 boys / 3 girls ▪ 3 aged 13-15, 5 aged 16-19 ▪ 5 outer London / 3 inner London ▪ 6 White British / 2 non-White British
Young people at risk of offending / gang activity	▪ 4 in-depth interviews and 4 small group interviews (involving 17 young people) ▪ 12 boys / 9 girls ▪ 7 aged 13-15, 14 aged 16-19 ▪ 11 outer London / 10 inner London ▪ 7 White British / 14 non-White British
Young carers	▪ 3 in-depth interviews and 3 small group interviews (involving 12 young people) ▪ 7 boys / 8 girls ▪ 7 aged 13-15, 8 aged 16-19 ▪ 7 outer London / 8 inner London ▪ 8 White British / 7 non-White British
Looked after young people	▪ 5 in-depth interviews and 1 small group interview (involving 2 young people) ▪ 3 boys / 4 girls ▪ 3 aged 13-15, 4 aged 16-19 ▪ 4 outer London / 3 inner London ▪ 4 White British / 3 non-White British

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[9] Although nominally some young people have been placed in specific groups, several fitted within more than one of the groups.

[10] All the disabled young people engaged were able to participate in the research independently and did not require support from professionals, family or friends. Their disabilities are likely to be characterised as relatively minor or moderate. The research findings may not represent the issues and disadvantages that young people with more severe disabilities face. Therefore, further, more specific research may be required in this area.

Recruitment

1.25 The young people that participated in the research were recruited via organisations that have a relationship with them such as youth clubs and projects working with young people. In addition, some young people were recruited using 'snowballing techniques', whereby friends and family members that fitted the criteria were introduced to the research through other participants or word of mouth. All participants were carefully 'screened' prior to participating to ensure they were appropriate. Participants were provided with a financial incentive to thank them for their time and effort and encourage participation.

Facilitating the interviews and group discussions

1.26 The interviews and discussion groups were facilitated by a staff member of Public Perspectives. A discussion guide was developed to ensure full and consistent coverage of the aims and objectives of the research across each interview/discussion group (the discussion guide is included in the appendices to this report).

Reporting

1.27 The interviews and group discussions were recorded and the discussions used to conduct a thematic analysis to identify key themes and issues against each of the objectives of the research. The analysis also aimed to capture the volume and strength of opinion and identify any differences in perception between the different types of participants. Quotes have been used to provide evidence and bring life to the findings.[11]

1.28 Case study examples of the lives of 8 of the participants (2 from each of the groups) have been included throughout the report to exemplify the findings and help centre attention on the lives of young people from different backgrounds.

1.29 The report is divided in to the following sections:

- Section 2: The lives of young people in London
- Section 3: Thinking about the arts and culture
- Section 4: Summary and key issues to consider

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[11] In the interests of succinctness, in most cases we have provided one or two quotes to evidence a point. The quotes have been selected to best exemplify a point. If a quote is not presented from a particular group it does not mean that the group did not support the point. The preceding text before the quote will make it clear which groups did and did not support the point.

Section 2: The lives of young people in London

2.1 This section presents findings about the lives of young people from different backgrounds in London, including:

- The activities, hobbies and interests that young people from different backgrounds engage with
- The aspirations held by young people and the challenges they face in achieving these
- The barriers, challenges and issues faced by young people in general
- The family, friendship and support structures around young people
- The use of technology and social media in the lives of young people
- Perceptions about their local area and living in London

The lives of young people facing disadvantage

Most young people engaged have active lives, including pursing interests, activities and opportunities outside of school/college activities

2.2 Most, indeed if not all, young people engaged as part of the research were leading active lives. They were pursuing their interests, hobbies and various opportunities. Although some were solely engaging with extra-curricular activities through school/college, most were also engaged in often multiple activities outside of school/college. These interests, hobbies or activities varied hugely from individual to individual, reflecting their unique personalities as well as their circumstances. For example, encompassing home based activities such as gaming, learning to become a DJ, making videos to appear on YouTube, watching films, reading, listening to music to organised and informal outside activities such as sport, skateboarding, hanging out with friends in cafes, parks or at youth clubs, volunteering or exploring parts of London and in some cases visiting cultural and art attractions such as museums, galleries and plays. Some activities were pursed independently, some with friends, some with family and some through clubs and organisations.

2.3 This is an important point to note in that there is sometimes a myth that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are inactive/not doing much.

Older young people are more likely than their younger peers to be engaging with activities outside their homes and outside of school/college, travelling further and engaging in activities independently of their parents or guardians

2.4 It is probably not a huge surprise to find that as young people get older they become more independent, more aware of what they're interested in and more able to pursue those interests. There was a stark difference in the volume and type of activities pursued by young people based on their ages. Young people aged 16 and over tended to pursue more activities outside of their homes and school/college, would travel further and would tend to engage independently of their parents or guardians. As one young person said:

> 'I started to do more and different things as I got older . . . about 15 or 16 it changed. I started going out on my own and doing things at the weekend with my friends . . . you don't need your parents help so much to do things . . . I'm really starting to know what things I like to do and what I want to do with my life.'
> Female, 17, Young carer

2.5 This links with the findings in the literature review which highlight that intervention in the lives of young people can be most effective at an earlier stage. This is when behaviours and attitudes are less ingrained and easier to change. It is also, importantly, when young people are most in need of support to engage in activities as they are less independent.

Young people at risk of offending tended to be less active and more likely to be spending their time engaging in negative activities, citing a lack of 'things to do', negative peer influence, a lack of positive role models and their relationship with the Police as some of the reasons for engaging in such activity

2.6 Although the young people at risk of offending in the research engaged in informal and organised activities and pursued interests and hobbies, they also commonly spoke about spending time on the 'streets' and 'hanging out with friends 'getting up to no good.' This suggests there is greater scope for working with this group of young people to divert them away from negative behaviour and influences. Indeed, some young people in the research had already started to move away from negative behaviour by getting involved in organised activities and using their spare time differently:

> 'I used to spend my time, in the summer mainly, hanging out with my friends on the street getting up to no good . . . just causing trouble . . . I made the choice to get out of it . . . but some of my friends are now in prison or dead . . . I got involved in [a youth group], got a part-time job and now that keeps me away from it all.' Male, 17, Young person at risk of offending

2.7 Some of the young people at risk of offending said one of the reasons they got in to trouble was because they had nothing else to do - that there was a lack of alternative activities. Similarly, some said they got involved because they were influenced by their peers:

> 'I'm not a bad person, but what else was I to do? It was summer, there was nothing going on, nowhere to go, we didn't have any money to go anywhere. So you end up hanging out of the streets and getting in to trouble with your friends.' Male, 16, Young person at risk of offending

2.8 Young people at risk of offending also said that they lacked positive role models in their lives, with some coming from broken families or not having someone that was actively helping them avoid getting in trouble (although it is also worth noting that some young people we engaged clearly had family help and support):

> 'I get on well with my mum, but she's a single parent. I'm the oldest and she takes it out on me. We didn't get along for a long time. I'd leave school and just hang out on the streets with friends and at the weekend getting in to trouble . . . my mum couldn't control me.' Male, 18, Young person at risk of offending

2.9 Some young people at risk of offending also said that they had a bad relationship with the Police. They said they were regularly stopped and searched, in their minds without due cause. This seemed to create a self-fulfilling prophecy in which they were labelled as causing problems and consequently started to live up to that label. They also started to develop a disrespect for the Police and the law:

'If you live round here and you're young and black I guarantee the Police will stop you . . . regularly . . . in the end you just get fed up with it and start thinking they're [the Police] out to get you. It makes you think bad of them [the Police].'
Male, 16, Young person at risk of offending

2.10 This all suggests that some young offenders have a lack of social capital (or less social capital) – a lack of positive relationships and activities to encourage positive behaviour and divert them away from negative behaviour.

Jerome's story

Now 17, Jerome first started getting in to trouble with the Police when he was about 15. A lack of things to do in the local area, combined with peer pressure led Jerome to get involved in low level gang and criminal activity. After 2 years of being on the streets with his friends, Jerome has turned his life around. He was invited to become part of a local youth group which works to improve the relationship between local young people and the local police. This helped Jerome realise that he could take a different path in life. It also helped develop Jerome's communications skills and confidence and he has made new friends:

❝ WE USED TO HANG ABOUT GETTING UP TO NO GOOD REALLY . . . IT WASN'T THAT MUCH, BUT WE DID CAUSE A BIT OF TROUBLE . . . I GOT OUT OF IT, I REALISED IT WAS STUPID. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO BUT I JOINED THIS GROUP AND IT'S HELPED ME CHANGE MY LIFE AND SEE WHAT I WAS DOING WRONG . . . I'M STILL FRIENDS WITH SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE I USED TO HANG OUT WITH ON THE STREETS, BUT I DON'T DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT ANYMORE. SOME OF THEM ARE IN PRISON OR DEAD. ❞

Jerome now aspires to make the most of living in London and his future. He likes to explore different parts of London and works several part-time jobs, while studying at college. He is trying to save money to buy a car and is considering a career as a youth worker. He leads a very busy life and doesn't have much spare time, but when he does have a spare moment he likes to listen to music and videos on Youtube and hang out with his friends round their houses or go to the cinema, shopping or eating out with friends.

Jerome

Building new friendships and developing new skills has helped him change his life

PROFILE:

Young person at risk of offending AGE: 17

LIVES: North / Outer London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Volunteer youth work

OTHER INTERESTS: Exploring different parts of London, part-time work, listening to music and watching videos on YouTube, hanging out with friends

CULTURE AND ART: Limited exposure, lack of school or family support and lack of interest

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS: Initially negative peer influence, poor relationship with the police and lack of diversionary activities in the local area, although now Jerome has changed his life around

Jerome's activity map

Jerome thinks it is a 'privilege' to live in London, which is full of opportunity. He thinks London is easy to get around and that there are lots of things to do if you are prepared to travel. He also thinks there are lots of work opportunities and likes the multi-cultural nature of London.

Even though Jerome states he likes to explore London and that London is full of opportunity, his activity map is focussed around his immediate area. He states a lack of time and money as his main barriers to engaging in other activities, while Jerome's 'habit' has been to spend time locally with friends rather than travel to activities and attractions in other parts of London.

Access to culture and art

Although Jerome has an interest in music and likes going to the cinema, he does not believe he is creative and is not interested in accessing cultural or artistic activities. He has had very limited exposure to cultural and artistic activities only through primary school, but not since then through either secondary school, family or any other source:

❝ WHEN I HEAR THE WORDS 'CULTURE' AND 'ART' I JUST TURN OFF. IT BORES ME. I'VE NEVER BEEN THAT INTERESTED IN THAT SORT OF THING. I'VE BEEN TO THE ODD MUSEUM, WHEN I WAS AT PRIMARY SCHOOL. I DON'T THINK I'VE DONE MUCH SINCE THEN . . . IT'S JUST NOT SOMETHING I WOULD THINK ABOUT DOING. ❞

The activities young people engage with help generate social capital such as new friendships, building positive relationships with adult role models, developing new skills and increased confidence and self-esteem

2.11 The activities young people engage with helped keep them busy and stimulated; in some cases they helped make and/or sustain friendships:

'I like doing what my friends do, it is just fun to hang out, go somewhere different even if it just means sitting in a café somewhere.' Male, 16, Young person at risk of offending

'I joined the cadets when I was 14, I've got a lot out of it. I've made friends there and also brought friends there.' Female, 17, Young carer

2.12 Where young people took part in organised activities, it sometimes led to them being exposed to positive role models that influenced them over a period of time:

'I've always liked coming here [youth club]. I'd always been interested in music, but it was only when I came here that I met someone who helped me produce my music. He was really good to me and helped me a lot.' Female, 16, Young person at risk of offending

2.13 Some young people also said that their activities helped develop skills, both personal, transferable and professional. This included technical skills such as learning to make films and music production and personal development/soft skills such as increased confidence, self-esteem and presentation skills:

'I enjoy making gaming videos. I've taught myself . . . watching videos on YouTube, speaking to friends. I got a bit of help from my sister who studies Media at University. I do it mainly for fun, but it could be something I do when I get older.' Male, 15, Young disabled person

'It's been really good for me [the youth group]. We've learnt loads of new things. We do presentations to other young people and other organisations and I'm a lot more confident about doing that sort of thing now.' Female, 17, Looked after young person

2.14 This all highlights how social capital can be developed through engagement in activities and also how some young people facing disadvantage are already developing their social capital.

Adele's story

Adele's childhood was spent visiting London's cultural and artistic attractions with her mum, while she spent her summers on organised courses such as music making and graffiti courses 'to keep her out of trouble' and expose her to new and different activities. Adele also volunteers and until recently used to attend Air Cadets. Adele likes to sing and make music and also likes to write short stories, interests she says have been developed from her mum exposing her to different cultural and artistic attractions and subsequently developed through her school studies. Adele says that these activities have given her a lot and made her a different and better person, developing new interests, skills and friendships – essentially helping build social capital.

However, Adele's mum has been fighting cancer for the last two years. This has changed Adele's life. She is her mum's primary carer, which places a lot of pressure and time commitments on Adele. She has seen her relationship with her mum change from being one in which her mum supported and encouraged Adele to explore her interests, to one in which Adele is now supporting her mum and having to neglect some of her interests:

"IT'S BEEN REALLY HARD RECENTLY. I HAVE TO MAKE SURE MY MUM TAKES HER MEDICINE, I TAKE HER TO HER APPOINTMENTS, I COOK AND CLEAN. I STILL GET TO DO THINGS AND GO OUT, BUT I CAN'T DO AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE OR USED TO. "

Adele

Caring commitments have changed her life, making it difficult for her to engage in all the activities she would like

PROFILE:

Young carer AGE: 17

LIVES: South / Inner London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Making music and writing short stories

OTHER INTERESTS: Visiting cultural and artistic attractions with her boyfriend, exploring different parts of London, volunteering, using social media

CULTURE AND ART: A lot of exposure and support from her family to new and different forms of culture and art

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS: Lack of time and flexibility due to caring role / Lack of money

Adele's activity map

Adele likes living in London and exploring different parts of it. Although in the future she would like to travel and possibly live abroad, she thinks London is a great place for a young person to grow up with lots of things to do.

Despite Adele saying that she does not have as much spare time as she used to, her activity map is busy. She regularly visits cultural and artistic attractions with her boyfriend such as the Tate, the Natural History Museum and the Science Museum. She also finds time to socialise with friends in parks, coffee shops and shopping and volunteer for a local community group which tries to promote the voices of young people locally. She also works part-time, alongside her studies.

Portobello Rd Market

Shopping and hanging out with friends in coffee shops

Westfield Shopping Centre

SHEPERDS BUSH

Going to the park with friends in the summer

Hyde Park

HYDE PARK CORNER

National History Museum

Science Museum

Victoria & Albert Museum

SLOANE SQUARE

Tate Britain

At home: Making music, writing stories, using social media

Regularly visiting cultural attractions with boyfriend

FULHAM BROADWAY

Fulham

School, volunteering and part-time work

Access to culture and art

Adele has been exposed to culture and art all her life, with her mum regularly taking her to cultural and artistic attractions from museums and galleries to plays. She has also attended workshops/ courses which have further exposed and developed her interests. Adele says that some of the activities have had little effect on her, but others have had a major impact. For example, introducing her to making music and inspiring her to write stories:

" MY MUM USED TO TAKE ME EVERYWHERE. SHE DID IT TO DEVELOP ME, BUT ALSO TO KEEP ME OUT OF TROUBLE. SOME OF THE STUFF DIDN'T REALLY INTEREST ME, BUT SOME OF IT I LIKED. I ALWAYS LIKED LISTENING TO MUSIC AND SINGING SO MY MUM SIGNED ME UP TO ATTEND A WEEK LONG WORKSHOP IN THE SUMMER. IT WAS GREAT AND I STARTED MAKING MY OWN MUSIC. I'M NOT SURE I'LL MAKE A CAREER OUT OF IT, BUT I WOULDN'T SAY NO. IF IT WASN'T FOR MY MUM EXPOSING ME TO THESE TYPES OF THINGS I DON'T THINK I'D BE INTERESTED IN THEM NOW. "

Most young people hold strong aspirations, often inspired by trying to improve their situation and that of their family

2.15 A lack of aspirations is sometimes cited as a cause of negative behaviour amongst young people. This research did not find evidence of this. Most young people in the research had strong and clear aspirations for their future, which tended to be most developed amongst older participants. These aspirations varied from person to person, but one common thread is that the situation of the young people tended to act as a motivation:

> 'I want to make money. Money is important and we [my family] have never had any money. I want to make money not just for the sake of it, but to try and help my family.' Male, 18, Young person at risk of offending

> 'I want to get out of London, maybe move abroad. I want to get out of this area and get my family out to have a better life.' Male, 16, Young person at risk of offending

> 'Going to university will be a big achievement. I was never that good at school . . . too much was going on in my life . . . but I like studying now. You need to go to university to get a good career.' Female, 17, Looked after young person

2.16 Some of the young carers in the research were more uncertain about their futures. This was because they did not know what would happen to the person(s) they were caring for, which made it difficult to make plans. Equally, they felt guilty about making plans for themselves which would mean they may neglect the person(s) they care for.

Parental or family support is often important in introducing young people to an activity and sustaining their involvement in that activity, especially at a younger age

2.17 Many of the interests and hobbies pursued by young people were initially introduced to them by their parents/guardians or someone else in their family. In some cases young people also received practical and emotional support from their families to sustain these activities:

> 'I like playing rugby . . . my dad took me to a club when I was 7 and I really liked it. He takes me there every weekend during the season.' Male, 14, Young carer

> 'My uncle brought me decks for my 14th birthday . . . he showed me how to use them . . . it gave me something to do and focus on. I've played some gigs . . . it is never going to be a full-time thing, but if it can be a hobby I make money out of I'd be happy.' Male, 17, Young person at risk of offending

2.18 The implication of this is that if there is a lack of parental or family support, young people may be less exposed to different activities and opportunities and less likely or practically able to sustain an interest in any given activity.[12]

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[12] This point is in line with findings from Cultural Engagement by Young Londoners: an introduction to key trends, drivers and challenges, July 2013 (A New Direction) which highlighted the role families can play in introducing a young person to culture and the arts and that young people from lower social grade backgrounds are more likely to cite teachers and school as introducing them to culture than young people from higher social grades where families typically play this role.

Warren's story

Warren is a looked after young person, living with a foster family. He lives near his biological family, whom he visits most weekends. Warren also has a mild learning disability. He struggles in mainstream school both academically and socially. He now attends a Pupil Referral Unit. Most of his spare time is spent at the local youth club. The club acts as a surrogate family, exposing Warren to new and different activities and allowing him to hang out with his friends and receive ad hoc support from the youth workers:

❝ I LIKE GOING TO THE YOUTH CLUB. THEY'RE NICE TO ME THERE. I PLAY POOL WITH MY FRIENDS. LAST SUMMER WE WENT ON A TRIP TO THE LONDON EYE . . . I NEVER DID ANYTHING LIKE THAT WITH MY FAMILY. ❞

Warren

Limited exposure to new and different activities due to a lack of family support

PROFILE:

Looked after young person (and mild learning disability) **AGE:** 14

LIVES: North / Inner London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Going to local youth club

OTHER INTERESTS: Playing football in the park, playing pool, watching T.V

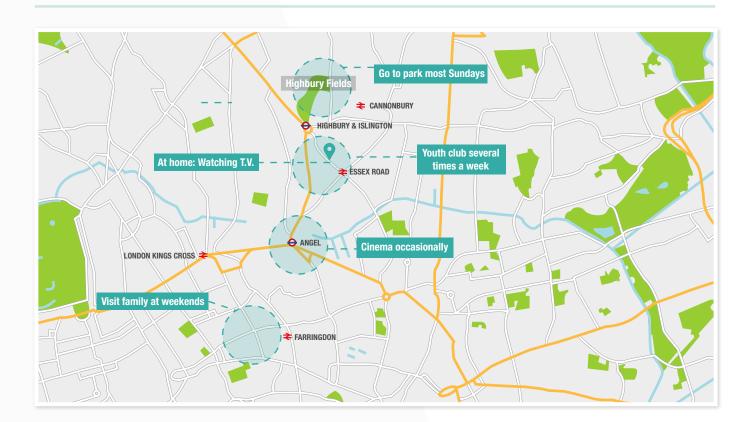**CULTURE AND ART:** Limited exposure and interest, in part due to lack of family support

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS: **Lack of family support**

Warren's activity map

Warren likes his local area, for him it is what he knows and is his 'home'. He says that he does sometimes feel 'frozen' when he sees a big group of young people, but he has never been personally threatened. He has not travelled much outside of the local area and does not have a view about living in London in general.

Warren's activity map is fairly limited and restricted to his immediate area. This has something to do with his age, but also to do with his lack of family support, which means that he is not regularly exposed or supported to participate in new or different activities.

Access to culture and art

Warren has had limited exposure to culture and art. He has never been anywhere with his family and his only exposure has been limited through either primary school or his youth club. He says that he is not bothered about the lack of exposure as he is not interested in creative activities:

> **MY FAMILY DON'T GO TO PLACES LIKE THAT. I DO ART AT SCHOOL, BUT THAT IS ALL. I HAVE BEEN TO SOME PLACES WHEN I WAS AT PRIMARY SCHOOL, BUT NOT SINCE THEN. IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME, I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THAT SORT OF THING.**

Peer influence is also important in introducing young people to activities and sustaining interest and involvement

2.19 Young people, especially older young people, said they often got involved in an activity as their friends liked it or introduced them to it and they wanted to spend time with their friends. They also said that, in some cases, they wanted to engage in an activity but didn't have any friends that wanted to do it with them:

'Most of my spare time is spent with my friends . . . most the things I do or have got in to, I got in to through my friends. You don't want to spend time on your own doing something, it's not as much fun.' Female, 16, Disabled young person

2.20 The implication here is that engaging with young people in their existing friendship groups rather than individually may be helpful in effectively introducing and sustaining interest in an activity.

Schools, teachers and youth organisations also have an important role in introducing, encouraging and supporting young people to participate in activities

2.21 Several young people also said they were first introduced to an activity through school and often by a specific teacher that took an interest in them and recognised latent talent. Similarly, for those young people involved with youth organisations, such organisations and professional youth workers were influential in exposing young people to activities and supporting their interests:

'I always liked music and always wanted to play the drums, but I didn't want to be a music scholar. My teacher thought I had talent and a space came up and they made me a music scholar.' Male, 14, Disabled young person

'I've been coming to this club [youth club] for a long time. She [one of the youth workers] is like a second mum to me. I've done loads of things through the club and she's taken me loads of places. She's supported my cycling, taken me to events and just encouraged me.' Male, 17, Young person at risk of offending

Technology and social media are fundamental to the lives of most young people, facilitating access to activities as well as being an activity in itself

2.22 As may have been expected, young people, technology (smart phones, computers and consoles) and social media are intrinsically linked. Technology and social media is used as a way of communicating and engaging with friends and family, finding out about and organising activities, as well as exploring interests through social media. Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and Youtube especially were used by young people to explore their interests. Social media is also an activity in itself, with young people spending large amounts of time engaging with friends and exploring their interests through these platforms :

'It's SO important to me [my phone] . . . it is stuck to my hand . . . I use everything, I speak to my friends, I listen to music, I spy on friends to see what they're up to, I use it for my homework, I follow people on Twitter and Youtube . . . I can spend an hour just listening to music or watching videos . . . I can spend ages putting the right photo on Instagram, you don't just put the first photo you

2.23 There are of course exceptions, where some young people were less heavy users of social media and/or were trying to reduce their use of social media as they saw it as a distraction. This was more likely to be the case with boys and older young people.

2.24 The fact that young people explore and engage in their interests on-line and through social media shows the importance of having a strong social media presence and occupying the space that young people frequent. This is both to promote cultural and artistic activities, but also to engage, interact and deliver cultural and artistic activities.

Barriers young people face in engaging in activities

Despite leading active lives, most young people experienced barriers specific to their lives and circumstances which prevented them from being as active and pursuing their interests as much as they would like

2.25 There is perhaps sometimes a misconception that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have few interests, are isolated, bored or not doing anything productive in their spare time. This research found little evidence of this, although it did find evidence of barriers preventing young people from being as active and pursuing their interests as much as they would like. Most of the young people we engaged came from relatively low socio-economic backgrounds and several cited a lack of money being a barrier to engaging in activities, which made some young people feel excluded and unable to participate in activities that some of their peers are engaged with:

> 'It's not like I don't do anything, but I can't always do as much as I'd like. We don't have much money. Some of my friends are quite well-off and they're always doing stuff . . . I'd like to do it but I have to say I can't or make excuses, it can make you feel excluded.' Male, 14, Young carer

2.26 There are a number of barriers or issues identified by young people specific to their situation, including reliance on family and lack of family support to engage in an activity, concerns about personal safety, lack of time due to health or caring commitments and chaotic and unstable lives which make participating in activities, including school, difficult:

Disabled young people	- **Reliance on family members to facilitate access to activities:** 'I can't just go off and do something on my own. I need someone to go with me, usually my mum.'
	- **Activities tend to be on their own or with other disabled people, creating a sense of exclusion:** 'I do lots of things I like doing, but I'd like to do more with people that aren't disabled. It is just the way it is, most the stuff you do is with other disabled people, it's difficult to mix with others.'
Young person at risk of offending	– **Lack of family support to expose to new and different activities and sustain interest and involvement:** 'I had trials to play for Southampton, but no one could take me there, so we had to forget about that one.'

	– **Negative peer influences which encourage negative behaviours:** 'You end up doing what your friends do . . . there's not much to do in my local area, so you and your friends get in to trouble to pass the time.'
	– **Concerns about personal safety which mean that some young people do not want to leave their local area:** 'I don't tend to leave the area. I prefer to be around people I know. I feel safe that way. It's too stressful going to other areas. There might be trouble.'
Young carer	- **Lack of family support as family members are focussed on their caring roles:** 'I had to stop weightlifting [used to compete at national level]. I needed someone to take me but they couldn't because my dad got ill.'
	- **Lack of time due to caring commitments:** 'I sometimes can't go out. Someone's got to look after my dad. He can't be on his own. I don't mind doing it, but I'd rather be doing something else. My friends don't understand. It can make you feel like you're being left out.'
	- **Lack of money as caring commitments affect the capacity of the family to generate income:** 'We don't have much money . . . my parents don't work as they look after my sisters . . . sometimes we don't have the money to do everything we'd like.'
Looked after young people	- **Lack of family support:** 'I never had anyone to do anything like that with. You can do a lot of things, but it's not like you can demand someone take you somewhere or always expect someone to take you somewhere.'
	- **Chaotic and unstable lives due to being moved around and emotionally unsettled:** 'When you're looked after, everything else becomes unimportant. You stop thinking about the stuff normal teenagers think about. In the end I missed a lot of school because things were so bad. I definitely missed out on a lot socially.'

21

A New Direction: Disadvantage and cultural engagement – a study in to the lives of young Londoners
Report by Public Perspectives Ltd with Middlesex University

Alex's story

Alex is partially sighted and also has mobility problems. His passion is playing (and watching) sport and he is a member of a disability sports club. His disability means that he tends to need practical/physical help to engage with activities. Fortunately he has a close family that provide him with such support. However, it does mean that he does not have all the independence he would like as a 17 year old. Alex also says that although he leads an active life, most of that is spent with other disabled people and he would like more chances to interact with people from different backgrounds:

" I'M REALLY ACTIVE AND PLAY SPORT SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK. I REALLY ENJOY THE EXERCISE AND HAVE MADE SOME GOOD FRIENDS. I'D LIKE TO DO MORE AND DIFFERENT THINGS BUT I HAVE TO RELY ON SOMEONE GOING WITH ME . . . THE ONLY OTHER THING I'D LIKE TO CHANGE IS THAT I DON'T HAVE MANY FRIENDS THAT AREN'T DISABLED . . . THERE AREN'T MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO DO THINGS WITH PEOPLE THAT AREN'T DISABLED . . . YOU DON'T GET THE OPPORTUNITY AND . . . YOU NEED DIFFERENT FACILITIES. "

Alex

Active sportsperson that would like to mingle more with young people from different backgrounds

PROFILE:

Disabled young person AGE: 17

LIVES: South / Inner London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Sports – both playing and watching

OTHER INTERESTS: Watching T.V and films, listening to music

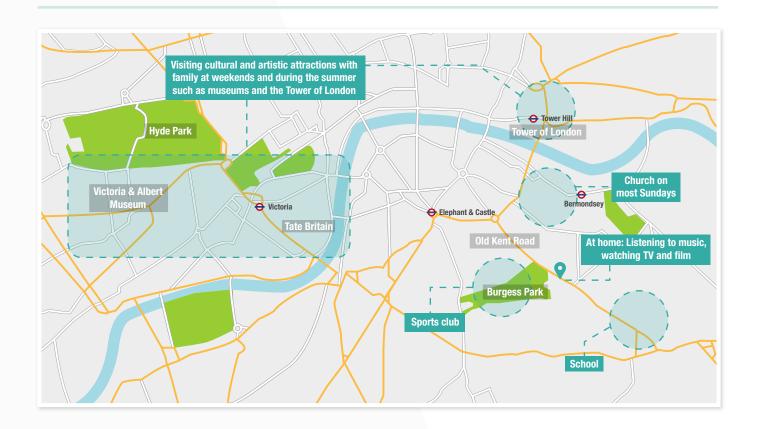**CULTURE AND ART:** Some exposure through family and school, although not that interested

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS: Practical accessibility barriers / requires support to participate

Alex's activity map

Alex likes living in London. He does say it can be hard getting around sometimes as a disabled person, but he also says there is lots to do for disabled and non-disabled people. He thinks if he lived anywhere else other than London that he'd have a very different life, with less opportunities to pursue his interest in sport.

Alex spends a lot of the time out the house, playing sport. He also goes out on day trips with his family to various attractions and activities during the weekends and summer holidays.

Visiting cultural and artistic attractions with family at weekends and during the summer such as museums and the Tower of London

Hyde Park

Tower Hill
Tower of London

Victoria & Albert Museum

Church on most Sundays

Victoria

Bermondsey

Tate Britain

Elephant & Castle

Old Kent Road

At home: Listening to music, watching TV and film

Burgess Park

Sports club

School

Access to culture and art

Alex has been exposed to various cultural and artistic activities, including visiting museums, galleries and some of London's major landmarks. He does enjoy this and says that he has found these sufficiently accessible. However, he says that his interests are more to do with maths and science as opposed to creative activities and ultimately he is just not that interested:

" I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN EXPOSED TO LOTS OF DIFFERENT THINGS, INCLUDING THAT SORT OF THING [CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES], IT'S JUST NEVER BEEN SOMETHING THAT REALLY INTERESTS ME. I PREFER TO BE OUTSIDE, PLAYING SPORT OR AT SCHOOL I PREFER MATHS AND SCIENCE. "

Perceptions of living in London

Most young people said that living in London is full of opportunity and a positive place to live

2.27 London is seen as a city of opportunity by most young people in the research, indeed some young people said that it was a 'privilege' to live in London. They said London is easy to get around and is full of leisure and work opportunities:

> 'Truthfully, I think I'm lucky to live in London. Me and my friends always say that we're lucky. You can get anywhere you want and there's always something to do, something going on. I'm now starting to think about work and where else would there be so many job opportunities?' Male, 18, Young person at risk of offending

However, some young people, especially those living in more deprived areas, do not like living in London or their local area, feeling that they are 'excluded' from what London has to offer

2.28 Although acknowledging that London as a whole may be a good place to live, some young people said that their own areas are not a good place to live. They talked about feeling as though their area was surrounded by better areas in London. This created a sense that everything was going on around them which they at best could only participate in occasionally and at worst were just observers – in short they felt excluded by what London had to offer. The reason they were unable to engage in other parts of London were a combination of practical (lack of money, difficulty getting somewhere, lack of time or lack of inclination as it is easier to stay local), environmental (concerns about personal safety travelling out of the areas they know), or more emotional (feeling out of place or not belonging):

> 'I think London is wrongly portrayed. It isn't as good a place to live as people say it is. You can travel less than a mile away and feel like you are in a completely different world . . . we do go to other places, but it isn't your home, your neighbourhood. You feel like everyone else is living a different life to you, with different opportunities. Everything is going on around you, but you're not a part of it. I just want to get out of London.' Male, 16, Young person at risk of offending

> 'It's o.k around here, but there's just not that much to do. For most people London is not like they make it look on T.V or in the postcards. I live here and know what it's really like. I just want to live abroad when I get older.' Female, 16, Looked after young person

Young people living in outer London tended to be less likely to talk positively about London and their local areas in terms of having things to do

2.29 AND's previous research identified that young people from outer London are potentially less likely to engage in some cultural and artistic activities. This research has found that although young people in outer London are active, some said that their local areas were 'boring' and that 'there was not much to do locally.' However, this did not necessarily stop them from engaging in certain activities locally or travelling around to pursue their interests:

'There's just not that much to do around here. This area isn't what you'd call a going out place. It's o.k, it's where my friends and family live. I like it and there's always something you can do. But it isn't like living in the centre of London. But we travel around a lot and explore London, so it isn't a problem.' Male, 16, Young carer

George's story

George lives at home with his parents and younger brother. George has been a carer to both his parents from a young age. George is honest about the impact this has had on him – he says that he sometimes cannot do what his friends are doing because of his caring role and that this makes him feel excluded or left out. He also says that his family do not have the money or energy to do a lot of activities together. Consequently, George spends a lot of time doing activities at home:

" MY FRIENDS DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT I CAN'T ALWAYS DO WHAT THEY'RE DOING. I HAVE TO STAY IN AND HELP MY PARENTS AND I DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO GO OUT A LOT. I DO GO OUT, BUT NOT AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE. IT DOES MAKE YOU FEEL EXCLUDED FROM YOUR FRIENDS. I'VE LOST SOME FRIENDSHIPS OVER IT. "

George

Caring commitments make him feel that he is missing out on living the life of other young people his age and making the most of what London has to offer

PROFILE:

Young carer AGE: 16

LIVES: North / Outer London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Gaming including making gaming videos, watching gaming videos on YouTube

OTHER INTERESTS: Hanging out with friends, exploring different parts of London, watching films, listening to music

CULTURE AND ART: Limited exposure, although interested in engaging more

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS: Lack of time and flexibility due to caring role / Lack of money / Lack of family support or exposure to new and different activities

George's activity map

George likes living in London and if he does get a chance to go out he likes exploring different parts of it, including central London. He particularly likes how easy it is to get around due to the transport connections. However, he thinks there are a lack of things to do in his local area, especially things that he or his family can afford.

A lot of George's time is spent pursing activities at home, going to school or visiting friends. He also has a part-time job, working on Saturdays and one or two evenings a week in a café. He does travel around different parts of London, but more to explore in general rather than to see or do anything specifically.

Access to culture and art

Both explicitly and implicitly George likes and is involved in cultural and artistic activities. He likes listening to music and making gaming videos and publishing them on YouTube. He also likes 'exploring' different parts of London. However, he has had very little exposure to any formal cultural or artistic activities, mainly because his family have never exposed him to these activities. George is studying drama at school and says he is interested in joining an amateur dramatics club, but has never got round to pursuing this interest partly due to his caring commitments:

❝ I'VE NOT DONE MUCH OF THAT SORT OF THING. ONLY AT PRIMARY SCHOOL DID WE GO TO MUSEUMS. I HAVEN'T BEEN SINCE. I DO LIKE ART AND STUFF LIKE THAT. I WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE OF IT, BUT NEVER GET THE CHANCE . . . I HAVE TO LOOK AFTER MY PARENTS AND WE DON'T HAVE MUCH MONEY TO DO THINGS. ❞

Section 3: Thinking about the arts and culture

3.1 This section presents findings about young people's definition, perceptions and their interaction with the arts and culture and its impact on them. It also discusses the barriers some young people face in accessing art and cultural activities and focuses on ways in which to enhance access and interest.

The concepts of 'art and culture' do not resonate with some young people - they evoke images of more traditional art and cultural forms, which are not always relevant to their lives

3.2 Similar to AND's research 'My Culture, My London', this research has found that the terms 'culture' and 'art' do not resonate with most young people. For some it is too vague, while for others, even those that are actively involved in creative activities, it has a negative connotation or comes across as boring:

> 'When I think of those terms, it just turns me off. I find the idea of them boring. My mum used to suggest going to a museum and I couldn't think of anything worse. I like art and I like doing artistic and creative things. I'm studying art at college, but I don't like the idea of going to stuffy museums or galleries.'
> Female, 16, Looked after young person

Young people define culture and art in the broadest of terms

3.3 Although most young people associated the words 'culture' and 'art' with perhaps more traditional concepts of museums, galleries, theatre and plays, they also said they felt that culture and art was more general and basic. They said that it existed in 'everything they do' and was how people 'express' themselves:

> 'I think culture and art is around us all the time. It is how you express yourself. It could be about drawing or taking photos, but it can also be about the different cultures and people from different backgrounds.' Male, 18, Young person at risk of offending

A wide range of activities fall within this definition

3.4 Linked to the above and again similar to AND's research 'My Culture, My London', young people felt that culture and art encompassed a wide range of activities. For example, street art, tattoos, street music and spoken word were all considered cultural, artistic and creative activities, along with perhaps more traditional forms such as painting, photography, drama and music:

> 'I think things like street art or tattoos are as much 'art' as a painting at the Tate. I find tattoos more interesting than most 'art'. It has so much history and culture, and also technique. The problem is that isn't recognised in schools, they would rather make you draw a bowl of fruit.' Female, 17, Young carer

There are mixed levels of engagement in culture, art and creative activities, with some young people heavily involved and others with limited interest or involvement

3.5   Some young people in the research could be described as heavily involved in cultural, artistic or creative activities, whether that be through active or passive participation. For these young people culture and art is part of who they are – part of their identity. For example, some young people in the research were taking art, drama or music GCSE's or A-Levels, have exhibited some of their art, taken part in school or local plays or published or performed their music. Some others liked watching plays or visiting museums and galleries or just exploring London's architecture, built environment and cultural landmarks:

> 'I would say I'm a creative person. It's the thing I'm best at and what I most enjoy at school. I'm studying art. I would have liked to take music and drama too, but they only let you take one . . . at home I like reading, watching films and sometimes write stories or do some painting – not for school, but for myself . . . I don't know what I want to do in the future, but it will be something to do with art, using my creativity.' Female, 17, Young carer

3.6   Some young people in the research could be described as having a passing interest in culture and art, mainly in a passive way. Some others were engaged in creative activities such as making videos and blogging, but did not really appreciate that this was a cultural or artistic activity:

> 'I like going to the cinema and I like occasionally going to the theatre with my family. Sometimes we take trips to central London, walk around, maybe go to a museum. I like doing it, but it's just about passing the time and doing something different, it isn't anything more to me than that.' Male, 15, Disabled young person

> 'I wouldn't say I am in to culture and arts, or that creative . . . I do like making videos. I like gaming and I watch a lot of gaming videos. I've started to make my own videos and post them on YouTube.' Male, 14, Young person at risk of offending

3.7   However, some young people (albeit a minority in the research) actively stated they had no interest what so ever in cultural or artistic activities. There are a variety of reasons for this (explored later in this research), although for some it is clear that their interests seem to rest elsewhere. However, even in these cases there were examples of where they were engaging in creative activities without realising:

> 'I just find it boring. I was never any good at art at school. I've been to museums and stuff like that, but it just doesn't interest me. There's other stuff I'd rather do with my time . . . I do like listening to music and I am planning to go to a festival in the summer.' Male, 17, Young person at risk of offending

Carina's story

Carina is currently studying for her GCSE's. Her favourite subject at school is English and she is an avid reader, reading a book a week. She also likes watching T.V and films, especially adaptations of books she has read. She is also a heavy user of social media – both to communicate with friends and also to explore her interests on YouTube where she follows various 'Youtubers', Instagram where she is a member of various 'Fandoms' such as Harry Potter and also twitter where she follows various celebrities.

Carina has a mild learning disability and mental health issues, which make it difficult for her to engage with other young people and build friendships. This acts as a barrier to engaging in some activities, such as visiting attractions where there are lots of people or participating in organised activities. She also has two siblings whom both have disabilities, which have placed significant financial burden upon her family as both her parents are full-time carers. However, despite these issues, her parents and grandparents have tried to expose her to different and new activities.

Carina

Her disability makes it difficult for her to engage with other young people, while her family do not have the time and money due to caring responsibilities to provide her with all the support she would like

PROFILE:

Disabled young person (and young carer) **AGE:** 15

LIVES: North / Outer London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Reading

OTHER INTERESTS: Watching T.V and films, using social media

CULTURE AND ART: Some exposure through family and school, although would like to do more
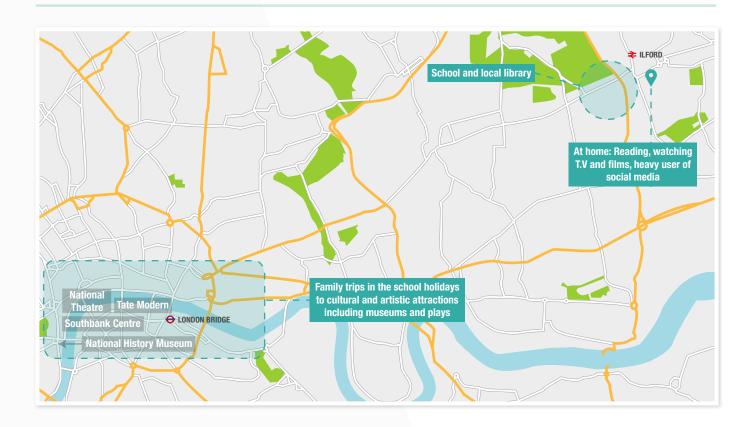
BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS:
Lack of money / Social anxiety and difficulty engaging with other young people

Carina's activity map

Carina likes living in London, although she feels that she doesn't make the most of it.

Most of Carina's time is spent at home or at school. She also regularly goes to the local library. During the school holidays she may also go in to central London with her family to see a play or visit an attraction including most recently the Natural History Museum.

School and local library

At home: Reading, watching T.V and films, heavy user of social media

Family trips in the school holidays to cultural and artistic attractions including museums and plays

ILFORD

National Theatre

Tate Modern

Southbank Centre

LONDON BRIDGE

National History Museum

Access to culture and art

Carina's main personal and study interests are in the culture and arts. Her favourite subject is English and she is also studying Art GCSE. Her family have helped to expose, develop and support her interests in culture and arts. However, Carina feels that her disability and family circumstances have prevented her from doing as much as she would like:

" I LOVE READING, ESCAPING IN THE BOOK. I THINK MY GRANDMA GOT ME IN TO IT. SHE LIKES READING AND USED TO READ TO ME AND LOAN ME BOOKS. I SPEND A LOT OF THE TIME IN MY LOCAL LIBRARY. I'D LIKE TO GO TO SEE PLAYS AND GO TO MORE PLACES, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD IT AND MY PARENTS DON'T HAVE MUCH SPARE TIME. I ALSO DON'T LIKE GOING OUT MUCH, I CAN GET QUITE ANXIOUS IF I'M OUT FOR A LONG TIME. "

One of the main barriers to accessing and engaging in culture and art activities is a lack of exposure and support from families and school, especially secondary school

3.8 The barriers or reasons why some young people do not access or are not interested in culture and art are several fold. Many are similar to those identified in the previous section around barriers to any form of activity, although some are specific, or more prevalent, to culture and art.

3.9 It is difficult to identify a clear hierarchy of importance within the remit of this research, although it is clear that a fundamental barrier is a lack of exposure to culture and art, both at home and at school. The young people that seemed most engaged with culture and art had initially been exposed to it by their families and then subsequently supported to further explore that interest. This initial exposure came in a variety of forms but often involved a combination of home based activities and visiting cultural and artistic attractions:

‘I think my interest in it [culture and art] comes from my parents. They are both in to that sort of thing. My dad loves music and my mum introduced me to world cinema. We used to go on day trips to museums and galleries when I was younger.’ Male, 17, Young carer

3.10 Where there was a lack of interest or a lack of engagement, this was often accompanied by a lack of exposure. The only exposure they had was through school – both lessons in school and occasional school trips. However, the school trips tended to mainly be during primary school so some young people had very little exposure once they are of secondary school age. For some young people this lack of exposure was not an issue as they said they were not interested, while others felt a sense of missing out:

‘I've never really done much of that sort of thing [cultural and artistic activities]. It's not something we did as a family. I did go on some trips when I was in primary school, but that was it . . . that's a long time ago.’ Female, 18, Looked after young person

Other barriers are a mixture of rational/practical and emotional/identity based

3.11 There are a number of other barriers which mean that young people are not accessing or interested in cultural and artistic activities or at least not able to develop their interests as much as they would like. For some young people there are just one or two barriers, while for others there are a mixture of barriers.

Rational/Practical barriers

3.12 Some young people cited a **lack of money, lack of time and geographical barriers** to engaging in cultural and artistic activities, especially attending activities such as museums, galleries and plays for example. This links to findings in the previous section, especially that young people living in outer London may be less likely to engage with some cultural and artistic activities. It also reflects the socio-economic backgrounds of some young people in the target groups in this research, where money and time is in short supply.

3.13 There are a series of practical barriers, which occur through the way culture and art is supported (or rather not supported) in schools and also other youth agencies. Firstly, there is a **lack of exposure to culture and art in schools and other youth agencies**. The limited spare time is used for other activities, including trips to, say, theme parks:

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Report by Public Perspectives Ltd with Middlesex University

> 'I've not been on one trip anywhere like that through school. We don't go anywhere like that here too [Youth club]. We have been to theme parks but they should take us somewhere more useful to us.' Female, 18, Looked after young person

3.14 Linked perhaps to the above is a **lack of priority given to culture and art in school**, such as only being able to take one subject in the field at GCSE level:

> 'I'm not very good at maths or science. If I could I would have taken art, drama and music. They [school] said I could only take one of them. They should let you do more. It is like they're trying to say to you that it [art] is not very important.' Female, 16, Young carer

3.15 Several young people, both those engaged and not engaged with culture and art, said that some **schools present culture and art poorly and have a limited offer**, where young people are not able to express themselves and explore their interests as it seems that some schools are **focusing on more traditional aspects of art and culture which do not resonate with all young people**. This experience can reinforce the negative perceptions around art and culture and put some young people off:

> 'I hated art at school. I quite like drawing but I don't like drawing a Campbell's Soup tin. I just gave it up as soon as I could. Unless you're really good at it or really interested in it, it isn't going to excite you.' Male, 17, Young person at risk of offending

> 'All they teach you in music lessons is to play the piano. I love music, but I hated music lessons. They just scratch the surface and don't do anything else. They need to make lessons more interesting and inspiring. At the moment they make something interesting really uninteresting.' Female, 17, Looked after young person

> 'The things they teach you at school just aren't interesting or relevant to me. I'm just not interested in learning to play the piano or going to a museum. They need to make it more interesting to me, I like listening to local street musicians who talk about things that matter to me, so they could do stuff on that. Or if they did an exhibition about black history that would interest me.' Male, 18, Young person at risk of offending

3.16 There also appears to be **a cultural barrier to some young people engaging in culture and art as it is currently presented and offered**. This requires more and specific research, but young people from Muslim backgrounds said their religion prohibits them from listening to music or drawing certain things. This puts them off from taking art subjects in school or pursuing such interests out of school:

> 'I'm trying to stay away from that, I'm trying to get back to my religion. In my religion you're not really meant to listen to music . . . or draw people, only God should create in that way . . . I listen to spoken word . . . if they did stuff like that in music lessons then it would be something I'd be interested in.' Male, 16, Young person at risk of offending

Savanna's story

Savanna is a recent 'care' leaver, having spent much of the last couple of years in care. She also suffers from mental health issues and substance misuse which are in part the cause and also exacerbated by her time in care. Savanna's family (both biological and foster families) have been supportive and helped her explore and develop her interests. However, her time in care meant that she missed a lot of school, lived in a variety of different areas and led a chaotic and unstable life. She says this affected her education, her ability to pursue her interests and has also restricted her social life:

" WHEN YOU'RE IN CARE, THE NORMAL THINGS IN LIFE ARE NO LONGER A PRIORITY TO YOU . . . IT FEELS LIKE A LUXURY TO DO SOME ART OR GO SEE A PLAY . . . I MISSED A LOT OF SCHOOL AND DIDN'T DO VERY WELL IN MY EXAMS, WHICH HOLDS YOU BACK, BUT I'M TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR THAT NOW . . . THE WORSE THING IS THAT I FEEL LIKE I'M MISSING OUT SOCIALLY. I PROBABLY DON'T HAVE AS MANY FRIENDS AS I SHOULD HAVE AND I PROBABLY DON'T DO AS MUCH SOCIALLY AS I SHOULD. "

Savanna

A chaotic and unstable life makes it difficult to do the things other young people her age like to do

PROFILE:

Looked after young person (and mental health issues) **AGE:** 17

LIVES: South / Outer London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Making and looking at art and design

OTHER INTERESTS: Spending time with her boyfriend and friends, taking walks in the park and local woods, coffee shops, listening to music and watching videos on YouTube, using social media

CULTURE AND ART: Art and Design A-level and reasonable exposure to London's various cultural and artistic attractions

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS: Chaotic and unstable life / poor teaching while at school

Savanna's activity map

Savanna thinks her local area is 'o.k', but says there is not much to do in the immediate area. She does occasionally travel in to the centre of London, but says that she finds it a bit busy and over-crowded for her taste.

Although Savanna does travel around London to pursue her interests, especially her artistic interests, both independently and through college, most of her time is spent in the local area. She hangs out with her boyfriend and friends at their houses, in the local park and woods and in coffee shops. She occasionally goes to a local cinema or to see local bands. She spends quite a lot of time on social media, communicating with friends and exploring her interests.

Boyfriend's house

AMPERE WAY (TRAMLINK)

Occasional travel to central London to see art exhibitions inc. at Tate, Barbican and ICA.

Centrale Shopping Centre

Coffee shops with friends

EAST CROYDON

At home: Making and viewing art, listening to music and watching videos on YouTube, Watching T.V, using social media

Parks and local woods

Coombe Park

LLOYD PARK (TRAMLINK)

College

Coombe Wood

South Croydon

Access to culture and art

Savanna's main interest is making and seeing art and cultural activities. She is a full-time art student and is considering pursuing a career in the subject. Savanna's family have exposed her to artistic and cultural activities and supported her interests, but she says that ultimately her love of art comes from within and that whatever her circumstances she would have pursued her artistic interests. However, she does say that along with her experience of being in care, that her school was not very good at teaching art. Now she is studying art at college her experience is very different:

> **I ALWAYS LIKED DRAWING AND I THINK I WAS ALWAYS CREATIVE . . . MY SCHOOL WAS AWFUL AT TEACHING ART, THEY MADE SOMETHING WHICH SHOULD BE REALLY INTERESTING QUITE BORING, IF I WASN'T AS INTERESTED IN IT AS I AM THEN I'D PROBABLY HAVE BEEN PUT OFF. FORTUNATELY, MY COLLEGE IS REALLY GOOD AND I'M NOW BEING INTRODUCED TO LOTS OF DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES AND STYLES AND WE GO ON QUITE A FEW TRIPS TO SEE ART EXHIBITIONS.**

Emotional/Identity barriers

3.17 Some young people said they do not engage in cultural or artistic activities because it **isn't 'for people like me'**. This sentiment seems to be linked more to socio-economic background than any specific disadvantage explored in this research:

> 'I've just always felt that places like that [museums, galleries, theatre etc] aren't for someone like me. I know that's not true, but I'd feel out of place . . . I've never been.' Female, 16, Looked after young person

3.18 Linked to the above, some young people said they do not visit or participate in cultural or artistic activities as they would have **no one to go with**. They themselves said they would be interested, but that most of their friends are not. This is partly practical as they think it would be more fun to go with other people. But it is also about identity, they do not want to feel like the 'odd one out' or 'miss out' on what their friends are doing:

> 'I don't do as much as I would like. I would like to go to see more plays or go to more galleries, but I don't really have anyone to go with. It is more fun to go with other people and chat about it afterwards.' Female, 17, Looked after young person

> 'You wouldn't get bullied for it, but my friends would probably not be excited about the idea of doing something like that so I've never brought it up. I would like to go and do stuff like that, but not on my own. I don't want to be left out.' Male, 15, Young carer

Amelia's story

Amelia loves making art and music and is studying art GCSE at school. Along with a friend, she has produced several songs, published on YouTube. However, she is often in trouble inside and outside of school, involving a combination of general misbehaviour and substance misuse. She also suffers from mental health issues and her family situation is difficult – her mum is a single parent and also has mental health and substance misuse problems.

Amelia likes her local area and prefers to stay local rather than travel out of the area. This is partly out of familiarity and partly due to fear of travelling to areas where she doesn't know anyone or could be targeted by other young people. This means that Amelia has had limited exposure to any kind of activity outside of her immediate area:

❝ I'M 15, BUT I'VE NEVER GONE ON HOLIDAY. I HARDLY EVER LEAVE MY LOCAL AREA. I LIKE IT HERE, BUT I'D LIKE TO GO OTHER PLACES. ❞

Amelia

Art lover with limited exposure to London's offer due to a lack of support from her family and feeling unsafe travelling too far away from her local area

PROFILE:

Young person at risk of offending   AGE: 15

LIVES: South / Inner London

FAVOURITE ACTIVITY: Making art and music

OTHER INTERESTS: Listening to music and videos on YouTube, social media

CULTURE AND ART: Her talents and passion lie in art and creative activities, although has had limited exposure outside of school and her own activities

BARRIERS TO EXPLORING INTERESTS:
Lack of family support / Negative peer influences / Lack of positive role models / Feeling unsafe in other areas

Amelia's activity map

Amelia's activity map is limited to a small geographical area and centred on family and friends. Despite being artistic, she has none or limited exposure to artistic and creative activities outside of home or school:

Access to culture and art

Amelia's talent and passion lies with art and music, which she believes is innate in her and developed through school as it is her best subject. She has been exposed to some artistic and cultural activities through school as she is studying Art GCSE. However, she has never been anywhere or taken part in any activities with her family:

> **MY FAVOURITE ACTIVITY IS ANYTHING ARTISTIC OR TO DO WITH MUSIC. I'M ACTUALLY QUITE GOOD AT IT, I HATE ALL THE OTHER SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A CAREER IN IT IF I CAN. I'D LIKE TO DO A LOT MORE, SEE A LOT MORE, BUT I'VE NEVER DONE IT. THERE'S NO ONE TO GO WITH. MY FRIENDS AREN'T REALLY INTERESTED IN THAT SORT OF THING AND MY MUM WOULDN'T TAKE ME. I COULD GO ON MY OWN, BUT I DON'T REALLY LIKE GOING TO DIFFERENT AREAS.**

Section 4: Summary and key issues to consider

4.1   By way of conclusion, this research has identified some potential strategic, policy and practical issues for consideration. In general terms it is important to point out that AND and other organisations in the sector are already addressing some of these issues. The findings of this research back up many of the findings in AND's previous research and provide further justification for the work of AND. However, this research identifies both potential tweaks to existing programmes and more substantial issues for AND and the sector to consider. Some of these issues are natural conclusions based on the findings of the research, while others have been inspired by the suggestions made by the young people in the research. The potential issues for consideration are as follows:

Ensure that cultural education programmes build on and strengthen social capital:
This research has highlighted the importance of utilising and strengthening social capital alongside valuing and strengthening art and cultural activities that young people are already interested in. There are two aspects to this, which are fundamental to the subsequent recommendations in this report. Firstly, cultural education programmes are more likely to gain initial traction if they start working with young people in settings they are already engaged in and with art and cultural activities they are already interested in. Secondly, these programmes are more likely to have a sustained impact if they help build the structures and support for young people to pursue their interests, such as strengthening family and friendship ties and helping develop the skills of young people.

Deliver a holistic approach, encompassing families, peers and early intervention:
Linked to the above, one of the key findings of this research is that family support is almost fundamental to exposing a young person to art and culture (or indeed any given activity) and helping sustain and develop their interest. Similarly, peer influence is an important driver of the activities and interests that young people engage with. In addition, it is important to engage with young people as early as possible before any negative behaviours such as offending or gang activity become ingrained. This suggests that cultural education programmes should adopt a 'whole family' and 'Peer-based' approach, targeting young people in their early teens and younger.

Work alongside organisations that are already engaging with disadvantaged young people: Linked to the above points, culture and art organisations and programmes will struggle to effectively engage disadvantaged young people and sustain their interests if they try to engage them independently. They need to work with organisations (schools and youth agencies) that have already established relationships with young people and already have the support structures in place. This way cultural and art organisations and programmes can build upon existing social capital, exposing young people to culture and arts, developing their skills, and hopefully sustaining their interest with cultural, artistic and creative opportunities. This approach has already been adopted in the Strong Voices programme and this research suggests that such an approach could be continued and extended.

Start with what young people are interested in and involve them in designing programmes: Not all young people are immediately interested in art and cultural activities or are aware they might be. Similarly, even where they are interested and already engaged, some young people do not necessarily relate to the words and traditional

connotations associated with 'art' and 'culture' and can feel that such activities are not for them. Simply exposing some young people to these more traditional forms of art and culture, without any initial groundwork, might alienate them. Young people define art and culture in the broadest of ways and want activities that are relevant to them and their lives. In order to find an approach that will resonate with young people, they need to be involved in designing, developing and even delivering programmes. Such an approach also has the added benefit of creating social capital through the skills and confidence that young people develop by being involved in designing and potentially delivering programmes. Once that initial interest has been generated and young people have been supported to develop their cultural interests, they can subsequently be exposed to different forms of art and culture which may not initially have been relevant to them.

Deliver community outreach programmes: Young people face a range of barriers that prevent them from accessing art and cultural activities. These include financial and geographical barriers, as well as deeper barriers about whether the activity is 'for people like me?' and 'will I be the odd one out if I take part in this activity?'. Some young people in the research said they think activities should be brought in to their schools and youth clubs/organisations. For example, specialist workshops on specific activities such as graffiti or tattoo art, drama or music workshops or community theatre. They felt this would give them a chance to be exposed to, and explore their interests in, different activities. In addition, providing funding or discounted access to cultural and artistic activities would also make it easier for young people through their schools or clubs to participate in such activities. Again, this approach has already been implemented to some extent through the Strong Voices programme, but could potentially be enhanced.

Support schools to deliver high quality cultural education: Children and young people often experience arts and culture for the first time through school. This is perhaps more so the case with some disadvantaged young people where there may be a lack of family support. No doubt many schools provide excellent cultural education. However, several young people in this research said their experience of cultural education in schools was not positive. Similarly, it seems that some schools are not prioritising cultural education. Very few young people in the research had gone on a school trip while in secondary school to a cultural and artistic attraction. Likewise, young people that wanted to pursue their creative interests in school are often prevented from taking more than one cultural/artistic subject at GCSE level. Understandably schools are under tremendous pressure and have a wide range of priorities, however, there is scope to share good practice and support schools to place greater importance and priority upon cultural education.

Make use of social media to promote and deliver cultural education programmes: This research is not the first to identify the heavy use of social media amongst young people, of all backgrounds. They not only use it to communicate with friends and family, but also to find out information and pursue their interests, including cultural and artistic interests such as listening to music, making music and publishing on YouTube. Many are engaging in cultural and artistic activities without knowing it, such as making gaming videos and uploading to YouTube or ensuring their photos on Instagram look curated and visually appealing. Cultural and artistic organisations, and no doubt many already are, need to be engaging with young people in this space. This is not just simply about promoting cultural and artistic activities, but also delivering cultural education programmes in this space.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Rapid Review of Literature

Disadvantage and cultural engagement – a study in to the lives of young Londoners: Provocations and insight from academic and policy literature

Dr. Ben Little, Middlesex University with Public Perspectives Ltd on behalf of A New Direction

Key points:
• The concept of 'disadvantage' is complex, contested and arguably politicized. Much of the literature may not explicitly define itself through the lens of disadvantage, instead it might focus on poverty, deprivation, social exclusion, class, specific named difficulties and so on.
• The concept of 'culture' is also complex and contested, especially between the more narrow traditional definition of 'High culture' and the idea of culture as part of everyday life. The latter definition is arguably more powerful in identifying ways to engage disadvantaged young people in arts and culture i.e. there is a need to build on their existing cultural and creative activities to gain their initial interest and so as not to alienate them when exposing them to new or different activities.
• At the same time there is also an argument expressed by some academics and policy makers that rests on an implicit notion that some forms of art and culture do benefit individuals and society. This view suggests that creating 'cultural literacy' will enhance the social mobility of young people facing disadvantage by helping them better articulate themselves, access opportunities and navigate choices as they get older.
• The concept of 'cultural capital' as used by some commentators is challenging given that it is defined and used in different ways. For Bourdieu, and particularly when talking about cultural capital, "capital" is also describing the ways in which social hierarchies are legitimised as much as the way in which status in one sphere of life is transferable to others. In practical terms, an emphasis on starting from a position of "culture as ordinary" and looking at the forms of creative practice young people are already involved in will avoid repeating this "legitimised dominance".
• An important headline finding is therefore recognizing that both disadvantage and culture are contested terms both in the literature and (by extension) in society, which has implications for policy and practice.
• The literature would suggest that future interventions by AND and the sector could be more productive if thought about through the need to build social capital in disadvantaged groups (i.e. building social relationships, networks and skills). This is partly because access to arts, culture and creative activities tends to build upon social capital and where there is an absence of social capital, it is difficult to develop and sustain other forms of capital.
• Similarly, building social capital is considered a powerful way of developing young people and diverting disadvantaged young people from spiralling in to negative activities or becoming even more disadvantaged.
• Key to targeting young people facing disadvantage, building social capital and supporting young people to engage with different forms of art and culture would be to avoid "double jeopardy" situations. These are instances of social breakdown where neither school nor family can provide the necessary social framework for a young person's well-being and therefore leads to a lack of access to cultural activities. This would be the area, for key groups of young people such as looked after young people, care leavers and young people not in employment, education or training, where targeting interventions to build social capital

through cultural activities are most important and potentially most effective, albeit challenging to achieve.

- There are some emerging key principles that could be embedded within policy and practice to help build social capital with disadvantaged young people (and indeed young people in general):
  - High quality arts and cultural activities that build on the interests of young people are a good mechanism through which to build social capital, bringing together young people around shared interests and values;
  - Over time there is scope to potentially broaden and strengthen young people's interests in different forms of art and culture that they may not initially have been exposed to or interested in. However, it is important not to simply or rashly expose young people to forms of art or culture which they may feel are not for them and thus potentially alienate them;
  - These interventions need to have a duration sufficient enough to support young people over a long period of time to have benefit;
  - Linking these interventions in to existing relationships, such as family, school, friends and other activities, will make them more effective and sustainable (e.g. whole family/home life approaches);
  - Early intervention at a younger age can be more impactful, especially at diverting young people away from offending and gang activity;
  - There is potential to use technology and social media to help build social capital and promote access to cultural/creative activities, but requires further investigation at this stage.

- The four groups specifically explored in this paper are: young carers, looked after young people, disabled young people and those at risk of offending or gang activity. In terms of these groups, the following key points emerge:
  - Assumptions about groups are sometimes contested and heterogeneity within groups is often asserted within the literature;
  - The groups tend to share similar issues and challenges in life which can lead to a lack of social capital, isolation and lack of opportunities;
  - They also tend to share similar barriers to accessing cultural activities such as economic, practical, social, awareness/resonance and psychological;
  - Building social capital and involving young people in arts and cultural activities can help improve outcomes with these four groups;
  - This suggests that despite the complexity of the concept of disadvantage and the difference between and heterogeneity within the different groups, similarities exist which can help shape cohesive policy and practice interventions to improve outcomes.

Context for the research

A New Direction (AND) has commissioned Public Perspectives Ltd, a social research organisation, and Middlesex University to conduct research with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to understand how they engage with different forms of culture and art. One of the drivers for this research has been findings from previous research commissioned by AND which identified differences in cultural/creative activity levels and interest between disadvantaged young people and other young people (AND November 2013 and November 2014).

As part of this research a rapid review of literature has been conducted to inform the research design and materials and help shape the reporting, as well as being a document of value in its own right that establishes some concepts for arts and culture based interventions in the youth sector when working with disadvantage.

This review has been produced for A New Direction (AND) by Dr. Ben Little, Senior Lecturer in Cultural and Media Studies, Middlesex University in conjunction with Public Perspectives.

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It should be stressed that this is a 'rapid' review of literature and not a full literature review and as such is not exhaustive. Instead, the author has sought key texts and attempted to use them in responding to the wider challenges posed by AND's growing body of work on disadvantaged youth in London. It offers a set of insights and provocations building from the existing research literature.

There is a wealth of literature on disadvantage from a variety of different academic and policy perspectives. These include but are not exclusive to:

- Academic fields of: Youth Studies, Education, Cultural Studies, Sociology, Economics and Political Theory;
- Policy work in the areas of: Education, Social Policy, Welfare and Benefits, Employment, Youth Policy, Cultural policy.

To maintain consistency, this document has focused on the interdisciplinary area of Youth Studies, but draws upon other areas where required. Ultimately, the broad aim of this document, in addition to specifically helping to shape the research, is to add to the discussions, thinking and research which are already taking place around how best to engage young people in culture and the arts.

This paper covers the following key areas:

- Disadvantage - a politically contested term: An outline of different perspectives on disadvantage;
- Reviewing disadvantage and culture: The challenges in conducting a literature review on this subject and the limitations of the available literature;
- Defining and contextualising "culture": Different perspectives about culture and disadvantage;
- Uses of social and cultural capital theory: A review of perspectives about the concepts of social and cultural capital, which may help shape future interventions;
- A summary of research related to each of the four groups of disadvantaged young people being explored in this research;
  - Disabled young people;
  - Looked after young people;
  - Young people at risk of gang activity/offending;
  - Young carers;
- A full bibliography of sources reviewed and referenced.

Disadvantage - a politically contested term

The concept of 'disadvantage' is complex, contested and arguably politicised. Much of the literature may not explicitly define itself through the lens of disadvantage, instead it might focus on poverty, deprivation, social exclusion, class, specific named difficulties and so on. A discursive perspective is important as in the policy arena, and more widely, both disadvantage and culture are politically loaded (and complex) terms. Disadvantage, like similar expressions to describe people whose wellbeing is at risk or have some sort of barrier to full participation in society (terms such as social exclusion, vulnerable, deprived and so on), needs to be understood as a contested mode of description for a group of people. The high level of politicisation around young people in this field is arguably a development of the last two decades:

'For many years in the UK, there was a tacit agreement in government that the welfare of disadvantaged children should not form part of party political arguments and should only enter parliamentary debate at the level of general policy... in recent years child welfare has become much more contentious, with regular discussions in parliament and the media about an array of issues affecting young people.' (Hare and Bullock 2006)

This politicisation is important because how disadvantage is described (and the sub-categories that are placed within it) will determine the sorts of action taken and affect outcomes for young participants in any programmes that have been influenced by research such as this. In terms of this rapid literature review, it means a certain level of caution has been taken in reviewing materials outside the academic peer review ecology.

As a specific term, disadvantage is usually used to describe forms of difficulty in social participation that include, but are not restricted to, economic barriers. It can be about expanding the concept of poverty to cover social and cultural factors or it can be a discourse for applying normative social judgements to "disadvantaged" individuals or families. Crudely, when defining disadvantage, progressive organizations will tend to focus on structural inequalities, while conservative organizations will tend to look at individual traits or family structures. Thus a progressive organisation such as the International Labour Organisation defines disadvantage in structural terms as follows:

'Disadvantage refers not just to economic factors, such as income poverty, or lack of experience in and poor understanding of the formal job market, but also social factors such as gender, racial, ethnic or migrant background, and geographical isolation with poor access to quality education and job opportunities.' (ILO 2011)

Conversely, a more conservative organisation like the Centre for Social Justice will argue that for excluded young people: "the underlying causes of challenging behaviour and disengagement from education are often rooted in the family environment" (Eastman 2011).

Politicisation of the issues continues through the think tank literature on the individual categories of disadvantage. For instance, a paper from the right-wing Institute for Policy Studies claims that state provision of support for disabled children is: "fuelled by ideological theories that have little relevance to everyday life"(Heath and Smith 2004). Likewise with literature on gangs, more progressive think tanks like the Runnymede Trust assert that the London riots were not about gangs, but about wider social problems: "The fact that [the economic crisis and the riots] might well be interlinked, and signify deeper failures elsewhere in our social structure, is not an issue that is being publicly debated." (Hallsworth and Brotherton 2011). So on the one hand, disadvantage can be seen as a structural feature of society encompassing racism, sexism and broad economic failing, and on the other as a result of social breakdown and in particular the failure of family values and a shift away from the nuclear family. In essence the position a given organisation takes on it says much about their world view and will influence significantly the practical and policy responses adopted by that organisation.

Reviewing disadvantage and culture

Substantial amounts of literature around disadvantage can be found across the humanities and social sciences and particularly in applied practice and policy areas, which a rapid review such as this can only focus on in a limited way. A scan of the available literature suggests there remains a key gap in terms of the explicit relationship of disadvantage to culture and the arts (this may also partially be a question of choice of terms).

There are also philosophical questions around the purpose of the arts and culture in relation to disadvantage. Why is it valuable? What purpose does it serve disadvantaged people themselves to encourage access to the arts or other forms of creative engagement? There are responses in popular literature that may serve to provide answers to these questions (art's value lies in a subjective experience for instance (Carey 2006)), but they are not specific to disadvantaged youth. The recently launched Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value stresses that production and consumption of culture and creativity should be enjoyed by the whole population and deliver the entitlement of all to a rich cultural and expressive life, with the end that this benefits both the individual and society (Warwick Commission 2015). Conversely the general trend in policy is to use treasury generated cost-benefit analysis of the value of investment in artistic activities (HM Treasury 2003). This is relevant in the current funding climate as, despite a huge increase in funding in exchange for imposing managerial protocols like cost-benefit analysis during the New Labour era, participation in the arts did not significantly increase or substantially widen (Edgar 2014). Justifying the funding of widening participation in the arts is increasingly difficult in these terms. Now as funding looks to drop to around 50% of its Blair era peak, many of the management mechanisms remain in place or are intensifying, while there are few new sources of income.

For our purposes here, work with disadvantaged young people in the area of the arts and culture will almost certainly be constrained by this double bind: a strict regime of accountability with a rapidly decreasing funding pool with sharpened competiveness for sums available. Therefore, this paper has approached much of the literature from a perspective that seeks ways to address the challenges this poses by using a conceptual frame that provides a language to respond to those demands for accountability. Consequently, the review has drawn largely upon materials from the youth studies field that look at ways in which the arts or cultural activities can be used to develop the social capital (i.e. the social relationships, networks and skills), alongside increasing access and interest in new and different forms of art and culture for disadvantaged young people.

Defining and contextualising "culture": Different perspectives about culture and disadvantage

For at least the last 70 years defining what constitutes culture has been a contentious debate in our society. On the one hand, we have the traditionalist position that culture should be understood as "the best which has been thought and said in the world" (Arnold 1869) leading to the "great tradition" (Leavis 1948) which produces new and deeper understandings of our common humanity, but which could also be understood as a process which determines privileged forms of taste. On the other hand, there is the classic cultural studies position that "culture is ordinary" and constitutes "a whole way of life" (Williams 1989).

This second definition is important as there may be named cultural (and sub-cultural) forms that young people might identify with, for instance disability arts, street music and street art, which may not be recognised within the traditional view of culture. Likewise an elite view of culture might miss that implicit within someone's disadvantage are various forms of creative and

cultural activity (Nayak and Kehily 2014). To understand culture as a whole way of life we would include culture/arts/creative activities that may normally sit outside of a narrow definition of culture such as street fashion, music, graffiti, lingo and slang and so on. Moreover this wider view of culture is automatically inclusive of differences in ethnic culture.[13]

Social class is another dimension of a wider cultural analysis that can also be helpful to describe some aspects of youth disadvantage. However it is important to be careful about simply ascribing the cultural dimensions of working class life as a deliberate rejection of 'bourgeois values' or valorising the culture of more extreme forms of deprivation as a form of resistance as:

> 'Alleged defining underclass features [of 'disaffected' youth] were largely the undesired result of circumstances beyond the control of young people and their circumscribed opportunities rather than manifestations of any rejection of mainstream values'. (McKendrick, Scott, and Sinclair 2007)

Practices that once could be clearly defined as part of working class culture either for working people or by them (Hoggart 1957) are not as homogenous as they once were, yet there are commonalities still and the idea of the working class (or classes) remains a useful tool to think through culture so long as other kinds of non-dominant cultures (sub-cultures, BME, queer etc) are also included in any analysis.

Many of the cultural activities that AND seeks to extend opportunities for are such that they can require acquired knowledge to appreciate them as an audience or extensive practice and honing of skills to be expert at them as an artist/practitioner. Forms of working class youth culture are no different – from being an aficionado of Charva fashion to being a Grime MC – dedication to a creative activity requires passion, investment and a social framework to understand its values and share the production of meaning through its practice.

Some policy assumes that hard to engage young people are disaffected and exclude themselves from public culture and that policy should work towards a change of attitude. Evidence shows this is not the case, instead suggesting that economic barriers quickly become internalised and young people develop psychological barriers marking certain activities as "not for us" (Muschamp et al 2010). To adapt to these internalised barriers, instead of starting projects from where policy makers and project designers want young people to progress to, they could begin with the cultural practices they already engage in:

> 'Young people are not disaffected, and neither is there a distinct sub-group within them who are especially problematic… education, training and social capital opportunities should be provided that positively respond to their preferences and self-identified needs.' (McKendrick, Scott, and Sinclair 2007)

In short, all this suggests that young people, especially those facing disadvantage and part of different sub-cultures, are not necessarily disengaged with arts and culture. They may just be disengaged with the forms of art and culture which are often publically funded and which they have limited exposure to and interest in and which they may feel

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[13] The Warwick Commission, Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth, 2015 highlights the importance of valuing different forms of art and cultural activity as being beneficial for individuals and society, especially as some groups are not, and may never fully, participating in publically funded arts.

'are not for them'. There is a risk that simply exposing young people to these forms of art and culture could alienate them further and, consequently, the starting point is to value and strengthen the art and cultural activities that these young people are already engaged with.

Uses of social and cultural capital theory: A review of perspectives about the concepts of social and cultural capital

AND has adopted the term 'Cultural Capital' to refer to the idea that by engaging with culture throughout childhood, young people are better able to articulate themselves, access opportunities and navigate choices as they get older:

> 'Cultural capital, in this sense, becomes a currency, an asset and an enabler of social mobility with the potential to help narrow the gap in terms of positive outcomes between children from poor backgrounds and those from wealthier families.' (AND 2014)

Linked to this idea is that of 'cultural literacy' which advances the notion that certain types of cultural experience and knowledge will help young people from different backgrounds have greater social mobility (Hirsch 1987).

These concepts may have validity, although there is little evidence available, due to a lack of research, to prove the theory. There is also a risk in using these terms which could be subject to misinterpretation and inappropriate use. Implicit within the concept of 'cultural literacy' is the notion that some forms of art and cultural activity, possibly publically funded activity, are of greater value than other forms. This brings us back to the debate between 'high' culture and culture being all around us and the need to start with valuing and strengthening the existing interests of young people before exposing them to forms of art and culture which they may feel are not for them or they do not resonate with.

The other problem with using the term 'cultural capital' is that it is a concept originally attributed to Pierre Bourdieu who employed this to describe how cultural distinction helps confer status and sustain elites. He did not refer to cultural capital in the way it is being used today by some organisations. For Bourdieu, cultural capital cannot be easily acquired. It is generated through a combination of domestic and educational environments (the "habitus"), but it is extremely difficult to produce artificially as it is largely transferred in the home: "the best hidden and socially most determinant educational investment [is], namely, the domestic transmission of cultural capital." (Bourdieu 1986). A high level of cultural capital is not simply an interest in specific creative practices (such as opera or ballet) that could be acquired by individual commitment or exposure to cultural forms that have typically been marked high culture - you could be a working class opera fan and still be working class. It is instead a whole set of class markers linked to taste and other forms of cultural distinction that mark some people as higher and others as lower class.

For Bourdieu (1984) institutionalised art also serves as part of this process of deepening exclusion:

> 'Art fulfils a vital function by contributing to the consecration of the social order:
> to enable educated people to believe in barbarism and persuade the barbarians
> within the gates of their own barbarity, all they must and need to do is to

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manage to conceal themselves and to conceal the social conditions which render possible not only culture as a second nature in which society recognises human excellence or 'good form' as the 'realisation' in a habitus of the aesthetics of the ruling classes, but also the legitimised dominance (or, if you like, the legitimacy) of a particular definition of culture.'

In such a way arts organisations should be very careful of using cultural capital as a concept for justifying intervention in the lives of disadvantaged young people as it could be understood as simply bolstering the privilege of those with mainstream cultural capital. That is, interventions designed to improve the cultural capital of disadvantaged young people may not be the best way to improve outcomes as the system is invariably rigged against them *through that specific capital frame*. For contemporary commentators, the metaphor of capital is attractive as it suggests exchangeability between spheres - economic to social and so forth - thus suggesting trying to build one sort of capital will almost magically help with others. However for Bourdieu, and particularly when talking about cultural capital, "capital" is also describing the ways in which social hierarchies are legitimised as much as the way in which status in one sphere of life is transferable to others. In practical terms, an emphasis on starting from a position of "culture as ordinary" and looking at the forms of creative practice young people are already involved in will avoid repeating this "legitimised dominance" (Bourdieu 1986).

Instead of cultural capital, a look at social capital might be more advantageous - this is the strength of an individual's social networks. Using social capital as an idea to describe disadvantage recurs throughout the literature appearing in core sources beyond Bourdieu, such as Robert Putnam and James Coleman (Coleman 1988, Putnam 2001, Tzanakis 2013). Importantly it is a lack of social rather than cultural capital that seems to be a key way to understand social exclusion (Deuchar 2009). There is some need for caution here as Bourdieu saw social capital, much like cultural capital, as a way of describing another facet of class domination. But unlike cultural capital, the networks, bonds and reciprocal social obligations that make up a wealth of social capital are potentially more accessible to those starting out from a less advantaged position (it is also a term which is far more developed and has wider use in policy and practice).

It is perhaps then through the frame of social capital theory (SCT) that the strongest justification for publicly funded creative activities can be found in terms of support for the most disadvantaged young people. While SCT has had its trenchant critics and many of their objections are valid, it is its close match to discourses of contemporary politics that render it useful:

> 'It has been at the core of Third Way politics, embraced by many western governments in the face of what some see as the crisis of the welfare state and the more recent failures of the free market economy to deal with issues of social and economic disadvantage and exclusion. In this context the concept bridges the political gap between market and state, or liberal free market policies and welfare statism, and brings the social into the economic sphere.' (Holland 2009)

When describing the aims of any programmatic intervention to combat social exclusion as being to generate social capital, there can be confidence that the theory behind the argument is broad and robust (if still contested). This may mean that the artistic or cultural dimension is primarily a way to bring young people together and engage in creative activity to strengthen their social

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networks. This would probably entail a (not necessarily exclusive) focus on cultural forms that young people are already involved in or familiar with.

A key paper here is Cherylynn Bassani's 2007 'Five Dimensions of Social Capital Theory as they Pertain to Youth Studies' as it is referenced many times and is used across a range of youth studies papers as means to use SCT to understand disadvantage. "Social capital is created in a complex process" she argues and moreover "that social capital not only directly effects well-being, but also indirectly influences well-being due to its mobilizing role [for other forms of capital]" (Bassani 2007).

Bassani argues that social capital is the pivot around which other forms of capital revolve when thinking about wellbeing. She suggests that across a wide range of literature that there is a linear relationship between social capital and well-being.[14] In trying to piece together what Holland (2009) calls an integrative theory of SCT, Bassani offers a framework to draw together different strands of thought from across a number of disciplines to create an effective tool for looking at young people. For instance: "It is easiest to think of social capital as having two fundamentally interconnected components: the structural (who is in the group) and the functional (how the people in the group interact)". For children and young people the usual sources of strong social capital revolve around structures with close-adult child interaction, but normally one that is shared as an experience with other children. For Bassani poor social capital is usually linked to "resource depletion" when too little adult time is available to children or other issues in institutional locations for social capital (school and family) mean that children cannot get high quality access to supportive adults.

Bassani argues that where social capital at home and in school is high (supportive domestic arrangements plus high levels of engagement in school) there is a boosting effect. Where one area is low, the young person tends to focus on the other social group in what she calls a compensating effect. However, of most importance in terms of disadvantage is where there is low social capital in both locations. This constitutes the "double jeopardy effect" and has been used to explain things like gang membership or other forms of social exclusion. Deuchar (2009), for example, picks up on this to use the diagram below to explain why people become at risk of gangs:

	Primary Group Social Capital (Home)		
		High	Low
Secondary Group Social Capital (School)	High	Boosting Effect	Compensating effect
	Low	Compensating effect	Double Jeopardy effect (gang risk/ other forms of exclusion)

Young people need a form of social belonging and where school and family fail to provide this, gangs step in with the tight-knit close bonds that are not being provided elsewhere and which we all need to develop.

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[14] However this has not been found to be the case in some literature around immigrant groups where closed but strong familial ties do not necessarily equate with increased wellbeing as they can prevent the formation of new "out of group" ties. This could possibly be read alongside 'Strength of Weak Ties' (Granovetter 1973) which distinguishes between bridging connections between groups and bonding connection within groups. Social networks could be a key way of generating weak ties and forming groups that generate some social capital (e.g. Wells 2011 on migrants in London).

The key opportunity for the cultural sector here is understanding that other forms of community (e.g. art/drama/music club) could provide an alternative source to fill this gap, but they must do so in a conscious way. While the normal corrective in such a situation is often resource intensive - increasing school budgets to reduce class size or prolong the school day for instance - there is also evidence to suggest that in leisure activities, the functional purpose (i.e. creative activities) can be more significant than the structural elements (number of adults to children) if the process is persistent through time. Moreover, it is also generally accepted that starting such interventions at a younger age can help divert young people away from negative behaviour such as offending and gang activity before behaviours become ingrained. There is also some evidence that linking project design to existing relationships, such as (family, school, friends, other activities) will make them more effective and sustainable (e.g. whole family approaches and working with existing peer groups or linking in to existing activities such as youth clubs or sports clubs).

Working from the interests and existing behaviour (including their use of technology and social media) of young people is important again because:

> 'Value differences among… group members … create functional social deficiencies because the parents, youths, teachers, and/or other adults who have dramatically different values are not likely to spend as much time together, or have as close relationships compared with group members who share the same or more similar values.... [and] ... In youth-centred groups, shared values are likely to be the central joining feature.' (Bassani 2007)

In conclusion, what this means is that arts and cultural activities can play an important role in generating social capital, which in turn can help reduce disadvantage and prevent young people from spiralling in to further disadvantage. For this approach to be effective, the cultural activities need to build on the interests and existing activity of young people (valuing and strengthening this activity) and be long lasting interventions that help generate a legacy of social relationships and develop the skills and confidence of young people as opposed to short term programmes. It may be that as part of this process, young people are supported over time to engage with other forms of art and culture which they may have previously had limited exposure to or interest in. By developing their social capital, it is possible that young people may then have the structures and support around them to sustain their interest in new and different forms of art and cultural activities.

The four disadvantaged groups focussed on within this research

The Warwick Commission 2015 highlights low levels of participation in publically funded arts and cultural activities from some groups in Britain:

> 'Despite the excellent work and high levels of commitment to change in the Cultural and Creative Industries, low cultural and social diversity amongst audiences, consumers and the creative workforce remains a key challenge for future success. We are particularly concerned that publicly funded arts, culture and heritage, supported by tax and lottery revenues, are predominantly accessed by an unnecessarily narrow social, economic, ethnic and educated demographic that is not fully representative of the UK's population.' (Warwick Commission 2015)

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A challenge for this research is identifying the groups most relevant to target within this research. One problem related to this is that, as mentioned earlier, disadvantage is complex and contested. Some young people face multiple disadvantage and fit within several different definitions or criteria. The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, (NatCen 2011) identified that at least 15% of young people may face 2 or more forms of disadvantage, which tends to have a more significant impact on young people and society. As they state: "Whilst the experience of a single disadvantage can create difficulties for young people, multiple disadvantages can often interact and exacerbate one another, leading to more harmful and costly outcomes for both the young person and society as a whole" (NatCen 2011).

In order to make the research work in practice, it has focussed on four key groups that face life circumstances that could be described as disadvantaged. The rationale for choosing each one is based on incidence, relevance of the group for London, the degree of complexity of their situation and where arts and culture is likely to sit in relation to that.

With the exception of disabled young people, who are instead more likely to be materially less well-off later in life, being part of the groups described below has a strong relationship with low economic status. People in care tend to be originally born into poorer families, young carers are often such because their family lacks the resources to provide for care in other ways and the public debate around "gang culture" is arguably little more than a highly racialized discourse used to describe the activities of young, often black, men from deprived economic backgrounds. This is significant because it means that many of the previous AND research findings which focused on socio-economic deprivation will continue to be relevant. However, it should be noted that assumptions about socio-economic status cannot be automatically assumed in working with these groups.

Another challenge is that assumptions about these groups are sometimes contested and heterogeneity within groups is often asserted within the literature. There is likely to be much variety within each group in terms of the reasons for disadvantage, the degree of disadvantage experienced and its impact on their life.

Disabled young people

There are 770,000 disabled children under 16 in the UK, representing 5% of the population. Although this is unlikely to be a homogenous group, most young people in this category face poor outcomes in terms of education, employment, finances and housing which tend to translate into poor outcomes as they grow up[15]:

- A disabled 18-year old is less than half as likely to enter higher education as a non-disabled young person of the same age
- 20% are discouraged to take a GCSE qualification because of their impairment
- By the time they are 26, disabled young people are four times as likely to be unemployed as their non-disabled peers; those who do work earn 30% less than their non-disabled peers
- 60% of people with a disability live below the poverty line
- Over 40% of disabled young people aged between 16 and 24 live in accommodation that doesn't meet their needs

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[15] Liveability.org.uk

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Data from the Department for Culture, Media and Sports also suggests that adults with a disability are also less likely to engage with arts and culture than people without a disability, something which is likely to have its roots earlier on in life (DCMS, 2012).

The arts for many disabled young people can often mean induction into a subculture in which disabled people take control of the definition of their conditions and assert an argument around disability that is resistant to dominant discourse. This is often something that happens organically due to the way in which disabled people are differently institutionalised - in terms of use of the welfare state, medical professional and educational needs. Some of these cultures are more firmly established than others - for instance deaf culture is well established with BSL a recognised minority language (britishsign.co.uk 2015).

Over the last few decades a broad disability subculture has received establishment recognition as both a political and a cultural movement:

> 'Disability art has become inextricably linked to a radical new 'disability politics and culture'; its aim is to bring about a more equitable and inclusive future... Disability culture... is therefore a minority, sub, or subordinate culture. It emerged from within, and is associated with, the international disabled people's movement, and reflects the norms and values of disabled activists, their supporters and allies.' (Barnes 2003)

The key principle in this culture is what's called the "social model" where a strong distinction is made between a biological impairment (a lost limb, or defective body mechanism) and the social disability (an inability to function normatively in society). Such a culture is particularly valuable to young people as "within the context of disability culture there is an acceptance of impairment as a symbol of difference rather than shame, and recognition of the significance and value of a disabled lifestyle" (Barnes 2003). However the social model is not universally accepted as being a useful approach to disability (Shakespeare and Watson 2001). The social model emphasises that any barriers to disabled people participating in any aspect of society including arts and culture is not due to the disability in itself, but rather due to the failure of society, services, organisations and activities to adapt and support the involvement of disabled people.

The Disability Arts Movement, the artistic movement linked to the subculture, is deeply critical of both the arts establishment and the use of the arts as "treatment" for disabled people. This is because it is: "about the nature of the culture of art and society itself" (Darke 2003); and moreover:

> 'Traditional responses to the issue of disabled people and the arts have been based on paternalism. Those disabled people viewed as inadequate and incapable have been given art as therapy in the context of special schools, day centres, and segregated institutions.' (Barnes 2003)

Helping to introduce disabled young people to disability art could be a powerful source of confidence in thinking through and coming to terms with their disability. Organisations such as NDACA might be useful to explore further links (National Disability Arts Collection and Archive 2014).

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However some caution is required here as there are more integrated approaches which may not be so explicitly political. While there is not a huge amount of academic material (although there is some - see for instance (Gjærum and Rasmussen 2010)), London-based groups like Chickenshed youth theatre (linked to Middlesex University) could make an exemplary case study of an integrative model. Calling themselves an "inclusive theatre" they go out of their way not to mention disability, rather seeking to emphasise that they are diverse and open to all abilities.

Looked-after young people

There were over 68,110 looked after children in England as of March 2013; over half became looked after because of abuse and neglect and a substantial proportion (45%) also have a mental health condition. Generally children in care continue to have poorer outcomes than the wider population; this is particularly true for educational attainment and employment outcomes later on down the line but also when it comes to homelessness and mental health. Although it is likely that children in care in London are doing better than those in the rest of the UK (London is ahead of the national average in the educational attainment of children in care), it is still a group that tends to face significant challenges.

Information on looked-after children can be largely found within social work literature, they are a group for whom the "double jeopardy" model could be useful for as both school and home can be problematic locations for developing social bonds. Similar issues that affected children in care can also affect adopted children:

> 'Most adopted children, other than those adopted internationally, will have come through the care system. Their early years are likely to have been unsettled and undermined by neglect, abuse, environmental disadvantage and instability, just as much as those of children currently in care.' (Comfort 2007)

Looked-after young people typically experience many classic traits of disadvantage. However, many of the factors involved are also associated with their likely socio-economic location in society: "The socio-economic risk factors that are linked with family breakdown and admission to care also predict low educational achievement, such as social class and poverty." (Berridge 2007). This suggests some care should be taken in connecting problems with a child's 'looked after' status with issues that may simply be tied to poverty.

On the other hand, understanding these young people as a distinct group has some advantages in terms of visibility. Getting needs met as well as challenging the "abnormal" status of their childhood could be helpful as: "Understanding children and young people who are fostered as a minority group who collectively experience distinctive childhoods with some structural disadvantages enables these commonalities to be highlighted" (Goodyer 2013).

One key issue facing looked-after young people is a lack of autonomy and often a failure to express their wants and desires: "The approach of child and family social work has been largely preoccupied with providing children with a safe, protected childhood, with a low priority awarded to the participation of looked-after children and young people in the design, delivery and monitoring of their services" (Goodyer 2013). This could be an area where arts practice could help develop their subjective understanding of the world and thus be better able to assert their needs, as well as develop their skills and importantly social capital within their groups and with other young people in different circumstances.

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Good practice could perhaps be found at 'The Centre' in Bristol formerly known as 'Our Place' which uses arts as part of their programme of out of school activities for looked after children. Its expertise around specific issues common to looked-after children could be useful in thinking about arts programmes that target them as a group, for instance:

> 'Many of our children can only participate in a group activity for 15–20 minutes or less, and then need a short time away to calm themselves and refuel... [however] looked after and adopted children are very often afraid to be left on their own.' (Comfort 2007)

Like with disabled young people there is a risk here in thinking about and working with people from this background as a homogenous group as opposed to integrating them into wider groups of young people without singling them out as different. Moreover it is important to note that:

> 'Residential care does not necessarily indicate a state of ill-being... Many children have a positive experience of being in residential care and consider that they benefit greatly from their time there.' (Axford 2008)

Young people at-risk of offending and gang activity

Youth surveys have found that 2-7% of young people aged 10-19 in the UK report being members of a gang[16]. Girls' involvement in gangs is a growing issue - 12,500 girls and young women have been found to be closely involved in gangs (Pearce, J.J. and Pitts, J.M, 2011). This is a category of young people which feels very relevant for London considering 50% of shootings and 22% of serious violence in London is thought to be committed by known gang members.

Gang violence tends to be localised and recurrent in certain areas with family and individual risk factors also tending to repeat themselves and violence and abuse being transmitted from one generation to the next. Risk factors for young people include: early childhood; neglect and abuse; ill health in the family (including mental ill health); parental violence and drug addiction; school exclusion and early conduct disorders; early involvement in local gangs; early and repeat offending, inadequately punished or prevented.

The youth studies literature suggests caution as much of what is labelled as "gang" behaviour "is simply a new label for normal youth group activity, used to justify increasingly repressive criminal justice responses" and that ideas about gangs often used with "little evidential base" (Fraser 2013, Deuchar 2009).

It is accepted that US based research into gangs (where they are a more established and deadly phenomenon) has informed UK policy makers. This American literature tends to produce an unhelpful stereotype of young people's social engagement around place, which is what sociologically gangs and gang membership tends to refer to (Fraser 2013). UK based scholarship has more helpfully understood gangs as sub-cultural forms in themselves with several useful pieces of research conducted in Glasgow over the last 10 years that have helped to dispel some myths.

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[16] Ending Gang and Youth Violence: a Cross-Government Report (2011)

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Social capital theory is frequently deployed to help understand the phenomenon of 'gangs': "Young people who are gang members get a sense of social identity from them which may be lacking in their experiences of family and community" (Deuchar 2009). So gang culture is a way of building social capital – gang membership itself is a cultural activity formed in a vacuum of other modes of social and cultural organisation. What constitutes a gang is also unstable: many activities perceived as "gang-like" are the consequence of normal youth gathering in the context of material desperation or social exclusion. This all then suggests that a way to divert young people away from gang activity is to engage them in alternative activities which are of interest to them (potentially cultural and creative activities) and help build social capital, steering young people away from negative influences.

Part of the issue here is deprived young men adopting forms of masculinity that assert individual agency where there is little agency otherwise available and that work within "street" logics that have modest mainstream value. For instance: "being tough has great subcultural value, it displays the cultural capital of knowledge of certain social strategies; it accrues symbolic capital in terms of prestige, and brings the social capital of subcultural group belonging and solidarity" (Holland 2009).

However, these macho appearances often obscure a profound commitment to the forms of cultural and creative activity that "gang members" engage in. Young people interviewed by Nayak disavow the violence associated with their subcultures in favour of their art, for instance one of her interviewees rejects the association of Charva gangs with violence: "A proper charv has a Passion for Monkey [rave music] and would rather sit in a house with a set of decks and a mic and MC till they can't talk [rather] than looking for fights" (Nayak and Kehily 2014).

Young Carers

There are 166,363 (just over 1%) young carers in Britain (Census 2011). This is likely to be a conservative estimate and more recent surveys have suggested the number could be four times greater. According to the Children's Society (2013):

- 13% of young carers are under the age of 10. On average children provide 3 hours of care a week but 30% care between 5 and 15 hours a week and 8% for more than 15 hours;

- Young carers are more likely to come from disadvantaged households – they are more likely to have mothers with no qualifications, to be from a family with three or more children and where at least one person has a disability. The average annual income of a carer's family is £5,000 less than a 'normal' family; they are also more likely to live in a household where nobody is in work;

- They are more likely to have poor outcomes at school - 1 in 20 young carers miss school because of caring responsibilities and many have significantly lower education attainment at GCSE level. They are more likely to be NEET as a result (1 in 3 young carers are compared to 1 in 4 of their peers) and less likely to be in skilled occupation by the age of 21;

- Caring duties place time pressures on their lives which can mean they are more likely to miss out on a range of opportunities outside school such as spending time with friends and engaging in activities.

The material on young carers again is found mostly in social work and social policy. Saul Becker's work in the 1990s seems to be the key body of work on young carers in the UK and it is from this that much policy is being drawn. The Becker and Becker 2009 report *Young Adult Carers in the UK* provides a good overview of barriers and disadvantage young carers face

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such as lack of time, lack of money, lack of identity, lack of parental support to explore interests and social exclusion especially from peer groups.

A key tendency is to argue that young carers are hard to identify. The Carers Trust lists the following reasons why young carers might not come forward:

- Their parent's condition is not obvious so people don't think that they need any help
- They do not realise that they are a carer or that their life is different to their peers
- They don't want to be any different from their peers
- They believe that the school will show no interest in their family circumstances
- They want to keep their identity at school separate from their caring role
- It's not the sort of thing they feel can be discussed with friends
- There has been no opportunity to share their story
- They are worried about bullying
- They worry that the family will be split up and taken into care
- They want to keep it a secret and/or are embarrassed
- They see no reason or positive actions occurring as a result of telling their story (Carers Trust 2013)

Making the situation of young carers visible then becomes a key concern, and there is evidence that many young people find intense relief in realising there are groups of young people who have similar experiences and that support is available to them. However, such relief is counterbalanced by questions of whether the young people themselves would want to identify as a group (Barry 2011). In fact, many might simply want the time to experience a "normal" childhood and adolescence, for example 16-17 year old carers "wanted to go out more but they were constrained in this by the growing expectations from their family that they should take on more caring responsibilities as they got older" (Becker and Becker 2009). So arts and cultural engagement might need to recognise that social engagement would again be key here and the double jeopardy model of social capital might well be applied (i.e. social breakdown at home and school). It might also be important that respite services would be needed in some cases of extreme dependency by the cared-for adult.

Other relevant issues for this group are that:

- Leaving home is complex, involving discussions and negotiations within the family, as well as being confident of alternative caring sources;
- Young carers aged 16 and 17 know very little about local services for adult carers, including services (if any) for carers aged 18+;
- Most young carers are anxious that the support they were receiving from a young carers project would cease when they became 18 (Becker and Becker 2009).

An important thing with this group is that interventions can be highly effective. Recognition of their status and support offered either through additional help or relief from care duties can have a substantial impact on outcomes (Carers Trust 2013).

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Appendix 2: Discussion Guide

Introduction (c5 mins)

Key points to note

- Background to study – why we're here and some of the things we plan to discuss
- Public Perspectives' role and background
- Discussions will be recorded
- Stress anonymity and confidentiality
- Set ground rules – no right or wrong answers, honest and open, allow others to speak, respect each other's viewpoints, don't all speak at once
- Sign (or receive signed) informed consent form(s) (from young person and also if parents/guardian/responsible adult required to sign)
- What happens to the information
- Any questions?

Key lines of questioning

Note: Although internally we are using language such as disadvantage, arts and culture we will avoid directly using this language upfront with any of the organisations and young people we engage. This is so not to pre-determine or overly influence the research findings. Ultimately, this research is about gaining insight about and developing an understanding of the lives of young people from certain backgrounds living in London and their relationship with different forms of culture/art.

Please note: This is a discussion <u>guide</u> and will be used flexibly depending on the flow of discussion. This means that not every question will necessarily be asked in the way or order outlined below. However, we will make sure that all the key issues are explored fully.

Warm-up (c5 mins)

- Just so I can get to know you a little, can you tell me a bit about yourself? For example, where do you live? Who do you live with? What's your favourite thing to do?

Living in your local area and London (c10-15 mins)

- How would you describe where you live?

Prompt:
- Where is it?
- What one or two words would you use to describe it?

- What do you think about living in your local area? (i.e. the area they have just described)

Prompt:
- What do you think about the way it looks?
- What do you think about the way it feels?

- What would you say is the mood of the area?
- What do you think about the people that live there?
- What do you like? What's good?
- What do you not like? What's bad?
- What sort of things/activities do you do in your local area?
- What sort of things/activities would you like to do in your local area but you can't or don't do?

- What do you think about living in London? (this will only be asked if the young person did not describe London as the local area where they live, which we expect most will not)

Prompt:
- How would you describe London as a city?
- What sort of things/activities do you do in London, outside of your local area?
- What sort of things/activities would you like to do in London, outside your local area, but you can't/don't do?
- What do you like about living in London? What's good?
- What do you not like? What's bad?

Your passion, interests and activities (c20 mins)

- What do you most like to do in your spare time?
- Why do you like to do it?/What do you get out of it?/How does it make you feel?/What impact does this have on you?

Prompt:
- What are you passionate about? / What are you interested in? / What activities or hobbies do you do?
- How often do you do this?
- Who do you do it with?
- Why did you decide to do this activity in the first place?
- What makes you continue with this activity?
- Is there anything that stops you doing it as much as you might like?

- What other things do you like to do? Why? What about cultural/artistic/creative activities?
- What are the most important things you own? E.g. Phone, computer/console, bicycle, (car/scooter)
- What impact do all these things you do have on your life?

Prompt:
- Keep occupied/busy
- Relief from everyday life
- Make friends
- Spend time with friends
- Have fun

- Stimulate
- Develop skills – both specific and transferable
- Widen my horizons

Cultural, social and digital network mapping

To help us get an idea of what you like to do in your spare time, we have a map of your immediate area and also of London. Using coloured dots and a pen, can you mark the areas you do activities and note down what the activity is, how often you do it and who you do it with. This can be anything from hanging out with friends, to going to a club or doing an activity.

What activity do you do on-line?
Prompt:
- What types of social media do you use?
- What do you use social media for?
- Do you do some of the things you've identified earlier on-line?
- Do you do different activities on-line to those you do off-line?
- How do your online and offline activities connect? Do you use twitter on your phone when you're out? Or instagram? Do you re-edit photos when you come home?
- Who do you share content with?
- If you do online only activities who do you do them with? Are your online friends different?

- What would you like to do, that you don't or can't do?

    Prompt:
    - Why would you like to do it? What impact would it have on you?
    - Why can't you or don't you do it? / What stops you doing this? E.g. practical, social, awareness/resonance, economic, psychological (e.g. not for someone like me)?

About you and aspirations (c15 mins)

- It would be good to get to know a bit more about your day to day life. What is a typical day or week like for you?

Prompt:
- What are your highlights/the good things?
- What are the challenges or issues you have to face/deal with? What's bad?
- How would you describe your life?

- What do you aspire to now and in the future? Why? How did you form this aspiration?

Prompt:
- What would you like your life to be like now?
- What would you like your life to be like in the future?

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- What might stop you from achieving these aspirations?
- What might help you achieving these aspirations?

- When you think about all the activities etc that you do that we talked about earlier, what impact do they have on your life?

Prompt:
- How do they form part of the positive highlights in your life?
- How do they help you cope with some of the challenges and issues in your life?
- How did they help you develop your aspirations now and in the future? / How do they contribute to your aspirations?
- How might they help you achieve your aspirations now and in the future?

- And how could all the things you said you'd like to do, but don't or can't do or don't do much of, help you in your life if you were to do them?

Making a difference (c10 mins)
- What would make the biggest difference in your life? Why? (or what would you most like to change about your life and why?)

Prompt:
- What needs to happen or change to make this difference? What is stopping this from happening?
- How would doing more of/some of the things we've talked about earlier help you in your life?

Thinking about culture and arts (c20-30 mins)

Defining culture exercise

Here are examples of different types of activities [lay out cards on a table]

[Cards: Art Galleries/Exhibitions

Carnivals

Cinema

Concerts

Cooking

Dance

Drama

Drawing/painting

Fashion

Festivals

Graffiti

Historical buildings/places

Holidays/travel/trips

Libraries

Making crafts/making things

Making videos/films

Museums

Music

Musicals

Opera

Park/walking/outdoors

Photography

Playing a musical instrument

Playing sport

Plays

Reading

Religious activities

Singing

Theatre

TV shows

Using social media

Watching sport

Writing a blog

Writing stories/poems/plays

Writing your own songs/music]

Participation

- Which of these activities do you participate in?
- How important are these activities in your life? / What impact do they have on you?
- What activities would you like to do but can't/don't? Why?
- What activities are you not interested in? Why?

Definition

- How would you describe these activities to someone?

Prompt:

- Which of these activities would you describe as being culture, art and creative activities? Why?
- Which would you describe differently? Why?

- How would you define art and culture?
- Just to summarise, can you place all the activities on the cards in to two piles – one pile you consider to be arts and culture and the rest in another pile [facilitator to explore any interesting selections that stand-out]
- Are there any activities not in the cards that you would also include as art/culture? Why?

Prompt:

- What activities do you think fall within art and culture?
- Would you include art and culture, such as museums, theatre, galleries, dance, concerts, plays etc? Why?
- Would you include other creative and cultural forms such as making films on YouTube, making music with friends, graffiti etc? Why?

Access

- What is stopping you doing different kinds of creative, cultural or artistic activities?

Prompt:

- Are there different things stopping you do different kinds of activities? e.g. different things stopping you accessing art and culture such as museums etc and accessing other cultural forms such as more street orientated culture?

- What could be done to overcome these barriers?

Summing up (c5 mins)

- Is there anything else you would like to say?
- Facilitator to outline next steps – what will happen to the information
- Any final questions?
- Each participant to be given and sign for expense/thank you payment and given information sheet

Research
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Community Engagement
Strategy Development

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