

CULTURAL FREEDOM:

KEY THEMES THAT HELP OR HINDER YOUNG PEOPLE'S CAPACITY TO THRIVE THROUGH DEVELOPING THEIR CREATIVE POTENTIAL.

A NEW DIRECTION

We create opportunity

New London

Looks at the changing physical landscape of London and new opportunities to build-in ideas for developing creativity

London's population is projected to increase by 70,000 every year, reaching 10.5 million in 2041. In order to meet demand, at least 66,000 new homes need to be built – along with space for tens of thousands of new jobs every single year (London Plan, 2017).

The New London Plan emphasises the importance of planning social infrastructure which meet the needs of London's diverse communities (social infrastructure includes education, community, play, youth & recreation services and facilities). As the plan states, 'social infrastructure plays an important role in developing strong and inclusive communities. It can provide opportunities to bring different groups of people together, contributing to social integration and the desirability of a place.'

The plan adopts a holistic approach to growth within which 'London's diverse cultural facilities and creative industries' plays a central role. For example, the plan emphasises the identification and promotion of Cultural Quarters, 'especially where they can provide an anchor for local regeneration and town centre renewal', as well as the identification of Creative Enterprise Zones (CEZs).

The response to local need is explicit – 'boroughs are encouraged to develop an understanding of the existing cultural offer in their areas, evaluate what is unique or important to residents, workers and visitors and develop policies to protect those cultural assets'. The plan also asserts that 'where appropriate, boroughs should use Cultural Quarters to seek synergies between cultural provision, schools, and higher and further education which can be used to nurture volunteering, new talent and audiences.'

When it comes to the issue of Play, the plan states that 'accessing opportunities for play, and being able to be independently mobile within their neighbourhood, is important for children and young people's wellbeing and development.' It recognises that 'there should be appropriate provision for different age groups, including

older children and teenagers. Particular consideration should be given to consultation with children and young people in the design of new provision to understand their changing needs' (The New London Plan, 2017).

Whilst young people appreciate development and growth in their local areas, they are increasingly worried that they will be 'priced out' of their own neighbourhoods (London Youth, 2017).

Cultural development can exacerbate this problem. How can cultural providers ensure local young people can access their provision? How can providers ensure sensitivity? Are cultural institutions drawing on the heritage of the local area or excluding it?

In addition, research has shown that cuts to local authority's budgets has resulted in the closure of youth centres and places for young people (Berry, 2017).



