



**Liverpool 08 European Capital of Culture:
Mental Well-being Impact Assessment
Executive Summary**

Acknowledgements

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The Mental Well-being Impact Assessment toolkit is available to download from:

<http://www.northwest.csip.org.uk/mwia>

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Executive Summary

What is 'Well-being'?

"Well-being is about being emotionally healthy, feeling able to cope with normal stresses, and living a fulfilled life. It can be affected by things like worries about money, work, your home, the people around you and the environment you live in. Your well-being is also affected by whether or not you feel in control of your life, feeling involved with people and communities, and feelings of anxiety and isolation". (Coggins & Cooke, 2004)

Mental Well-being Impact Assessment (MWIA)

is a way of identifying potential positive and negative impacts on the health and well-being of those directly and indirectly affected by projects and policies such as the Capital of Culture programme. The Impact Assessment results in evidence-based recommendations, which will inform decision-makers how they can increase the benefits and reduce negative effects resulting from the Capital of Culture. The Culture Company has shown an exemplary commitment to improving the mental well-being of the population by commissioning a Mental Well-being Impact Assessment, and these recommendations are intended to optimise their existing programme of work.

Aim & Objectives of the Project

The overall aim of the project was to carry out a Mental Well-being Impact Assessment of the Liverpool Capital of Culture programme, using the draft MWIA toolkit that was being developed by a partnership of interested organisations.

The objectives of this project were:

- To assess the impact of a wide range of Culture Company strategies, policies and projects upon factors likely to promote and protect mental well-being, and in particular on enhancing control, increasing resilience, facilitating participation and promoting social inclusion.
- To select, screen and assess a range of programmes reflecting the range of Culture Company objectives.
- To engage with the Culture Company, their stakeholders, and members of the community in assessing potential impacts on mental well-being, developing indicators of these impacts, and formulating recommendations.

- To pilot the newly developed MWIA toolkit, and contribute to its development through evaluating the experiences of those using it and participating in the project.

What does MWIA involve?

The MWIA process involves exploring positive and negative impacts a project may have on mental well-being, by asking those involved in the project to answer a series of questions and reviewing the research literature. This process helps to create recommendations which will help with the development of initiatives and enhance their impact on people's well-being.

Screening

The initial 'screening' stage explores some of the effects that the programme could have on mental well-being, and is used to decide whether a more intensive assessment should be carried out.

16 projects & policies were screened

These were: HUB Festival, Chinese New Year, Show Racism the Red Card, Directors Cut, 08 Business Connect, G-litter, Grants programme, Four Corners of the City, Commercial partners, Mersey Boroughs, 08 Volunteers, 08 Welcome customer service programme, Made in Liverpool, Philharmonic War Requiem performance, Liverpool Music Week, and the 08 Vision statement.

Workshops

To provide a more intensive assessment, a range of stakeholders were invited to a half-day or one-day workshop. At this stage, people who are involved in the project in different ways were invited to participate, such as funders, managers, people with a creative/artistic role, and communities the project has or will work with, in order to get as wide a perspective and as many ideas as possible.

8 projects & policies participated in workshops

The Grants programme, G-litter, Four Corners of the City, Mersey Boroughs programme, 08 Volunteers, Chinese New Year, Commercial Partners, and the 08 Vision Document.



Results

As expected, both positive and negative impacts of the Liverpool Capital of Culture programme on mental well-being were identified. **14 Themes** were identified as emerging from the workshops and screening, and reviewing the research evidence:

Consultation & Decision-making
Challenging Discrimination, Inequalities and Cultural Attitudes
Emotional Well-being
Neighbourhood Change and Crime
Arts & Culture
Spirituality & Connectedness
Physical Health
Involving Communities & Bringing People Together
Physical Environment & Transport
Cost, Income & Employment
Access, Advocacy & Practical Support
Communication & Trust
Feedback & Evaluation
Legacy & Sustainability

33 Recommendations were developed by the project steering group, based upon the recommendations suggested during the workshops, research evidence and analysis of the themes. These highlight areas in which the Culture Company is already investing in the mental well-being of the population, and where this impact could be maximised.

Evaluation

An important element of the project was to pilot the newly developed MWIA toolkit, and evaluate the experiences of those using it and participating in the project. Feedback was requested from workshop and screening participants, project leads and workshop facilitators. A number of changes were made to the toolkit in response to this feedback.

Some recurring themes in the feedback were:

Strengths

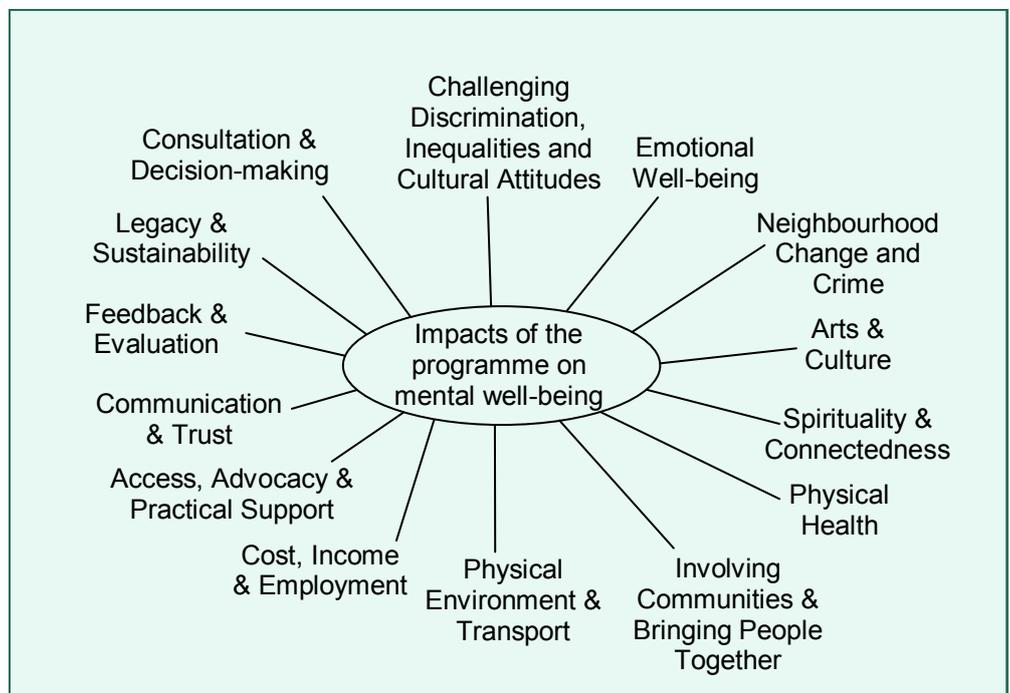
- Raised awareness and understanding of mental well-being.
- A useful process for developing the project.
- The value of bringing people together and discussions with a range of stakeholders.

Improvements

- Simplifying the terminology and the process.
- Providing more information in the invitation and introduction of the workshop.
- Defining the project being assessed, for example providing a written summary.
- Engaging a more representative range of stakeholders in the workshops.

Project Group:

Catherine Reynolds, Liverpool PCT (Chair)
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Ruth Gould, NWDAF & Liverpool Culture Company Board
Julie Hanna, Liverpool Culture Company
Ruth Melville, Impacts 08, University of Liverpool
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Phil Taylor, Liverpool Culture Company
Helen West, IMPACT, University of Liverpool



Recommendations

Overall Recommendations for the Culture Company Board and Directors:

Receive the report and a presentation of it.
Explore, understand and reflect upon the results.

Articulate the link between mental well-being and the aims and objectives of the Culture Company and the 08 Vision statement. Raise awareness about the importance of mental well-being in achieving those aims.

Commission a working group to produce an action plan to implement and monitor key recommendations of the report, in conjunction with the Capital of Culture monitoring and evaluation processes.

Consultation & Decision-making

Facilitate internal involvement in decision-making, for example by introducing a staff intranet system or communal space to foster engagement.

Take any opportunities for consultation of users at events. Facilitate involvement in decision-making using tools such as the 08 Roadshow. Ensure that feedback reaches the appropriate decision-makers.

Ensure that communities are aware of open decision-making and publicise good practice.

Challenging Discrimination, Inequalities and Cultural Attitudes

Ensure that all aspects of the Culture Company programme actively enhance diversity, equality and inclusion. Encourage other organisations using the Liverpool 08 branding to meet the same standards.

Emotional Well-being

Consider how modifications to the work environment of Culture Company employees could enhance their emotional well-being.

Ensure that emotional well-being is included in the 08 Vision statement and other written outputs.

Neighbourhood Change and Crime

Contribute to the work of the Liverpool Commission 'Health is Wealth'.

Recognise that people's sense of safety and mental well-being are inter-dependent.

Arts & Culture

Realign commissioning so that it values, and is informed by, the needs of communities and artists.

Retain a central role for Culture in the 08 Vision statement, linking it to play, fun, leisure, aesthetics, enjoyment and inspiration, in addition to the environment, health, and education.

Foster clarity and agreement with partnering organisations, facilitate sharing, and manage these relationships well so that they see the value of culture in enhancing well-being.

Make arts and culture accessible to all, by publicising the involvement that people can have in the European Capital of Culture programme.

Spirituality & Connectedness

Value relationships, shared goals, and process, and recognise the role of culture as a tool to connect different parts of the community.

Work to help people see the value of spirituality and connectedness in enhancing mental well-being.

Physical Health

Raise awareness of the Public Health agenda, engaging with initiatives such as Taste for Health, SmokeFree Liverpool, Liverpool Feels Good (which includes alcohol) and Liverpool Active City and generalise these priorities across the Culture Company programme.

Build physical health into events and projects across the Culture Company programme.



Involving Communities & Bringing People Together

Acknowledge the potential for the European Capital of Culture to both increase involvement and engagement, but could also lead to people feeling excluded. Seek to include everyone, and be mindful of who may be excluded.

Recognise the responsibility that the Culture Company carries for these outcomes. Clarify the roles, relationships and responsibilities around maximising inclusion, at a strategic level.

Raise awareness of the geographical spread of the Capital of Culture programme. Host a sizeable proportion of activities outside the city centre, and provide ways of accessing the city centre for those living in outlying areas (e.g. special buses or trains, reduced fares).

Physical Environment & Transport

The planning of all Culture Company projects should take into account their impact on the environment.

The 2009 theme of environment should be used to raise awareness of the link between environment and mental well-being.

Cost, Income & Employment

The Culture Company links with business should acknowledge that the mental well-being of employees contributes to their productivity.

Access, Advocacy & Practical Support

See recommendations for **Challenging discrimination, inequalities and cultural attitudes**

Communication & Trust

Clearly communicate the benefits for Liverpool of the European Capital of Culture and the work of the Culture Company. Provide visible and tangible examples of the work of the Culture Company around Liverpool, for example publicly celebrating events after they have happened, so that successes are recognised.

Promote open, honest and clear communication in all aspects of Culture Company business.

Consider how clarity and transparency in internal communications could enhance the work environment of Culture Company staff.

Feedback & Evaluation

Conduct a workshop to develop indicators for evaluating the impact of the Culture Company programme and the European Capital of Culture upon mental well-being, and proceed to monitor these indicators.

Emphasise evaluation, reflection and learning to enable the Culture Company to realise its delivery objectives.

Engage with Impacts 08, communicate the benefits of evaluation, publicise evaluations that have taken place and implement the results of evaluation.

Legacy & Sustainability

Consider how Culture Company staff and partners could be involved in the formulation and communication of the Culture Company exit strategy.

Consider how the public and key stakeholders can best be involved in ensuring the best possible cultural legacy of 2008.

