



Sport, Recreation and the Arts Debate on 19 December 2018

Summary

This House of Lords Library Briefing has been prepared in advance of the debate due to take place on 19 December 2018 in the House of Lords on the motion moved by Lord Moynihan (Conservative), “that this House takes note of how sport, recreation and the arts contribute to the wellbeing of society”.

The Government has reviewed evidence suggesting that both sport and the arts can positively affect health, wellbeing, community cohesion, social behaviour, and individuals’ outcomes. This review is considered in the first section of this briefing, alongside evidence gathered by Sport England and the Arts Council England. For the avoidance of doubt, recreational activities (for example, walking or going to museums and galleries) are considered under the sport and the arts headings in the same section.

The second and third sections of the briefing highlight data on wellbeing in the UK and on participation and engagement rates with sport and culture. As part of its measuring national wellbeing programme, the Office for National Statistics has reported an average rate of 7.7 out of 10 for life satisfaction in England and in the UK. The UK’s score (when compared against other countries in 2015) was around the OECD-country average.

Sport England and Arts Council England have surveyed participation in their respective sectors. Their reports found that:

- 62.3% (28 million) of people were classed as physically “active”, 12.5% (5.6 million) were “fairly active”, and 25.2% (11.3 million) were classed as “inactive” (under 30 minutes of moderate activity).
- 78.9% of adults had engaged with the arts at least once in 2017/18 (this included engagement or participation with theatre, dance, carnivals, exhibitions, book clubs etc).

This briefing sets out further breakdowns of engagement levels, including types of activity and participation by different age groups.

The final section of the briefing summarises sport and cultural engagement policies. This includes programmes and funding managed by Sport England and by Arts Council England, such as those intended to engage with under-represented groups. The briefing also refers to the Government’s 2015 *Sporting Future* strategy and its 2016 white paper on culture.

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I. Links Between Sport and the Arts and Wellbeing

I.1 Culture and Sport Evidence Programme Report

A report published in 2015, funded as part of the Coalition Government's culture and sport evidence programme, analysed the global evidence base on the social impacts of sport and culture.¹ It considered four main aspects:

- improved health;
- reduced crime;
- increased social capital; and
- improved education outcomes.

The evidence was collated in a literature review and was split into sections looking at: sport and exercise; the arts; heritage; and museums, libraries and archives. A summary of the review's findings about sports and the arts is set out below.

Sport

The literature review found there was "significant evidence" as to the social benefits from participation in sport.² It said that the "highest quality evidence" concerned health benefits, by which participation helps prevent or reduce physical and mental health problems and can therefore save on health care costs. Health benefits were seen "population-wide" but were "particularly important to older people". Analysing this evidence further, the paper highlighted three main ways sport and exercise can improve health:

- Biological mechanisms which help to increase fitness, reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and other chronic diseases and providing therapeutic benefits for certain chronic diseases which lead to a reduced risk of premature death;
- Physiological mechanisms which reduce stress hormones, improve psychological wellbeing and lead to improved mental health and a reduced risk of depression and premature death;
- Psychological mechanisms of self-efficacy, distraction and self-esteem which in turn also reduce stress and anxiety, improve psychological wellbeing and mental health and lead to a reduced risk of depression and premature death. Psychological wellbeing and improved mental health are linked to physical health as they also play an important part in the prevention and management of

¹ Culture and Sport Evidence Programme, [A Review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport](#), March 2015. The project was described as a "joint programme of strategic research led by the then Department for Culture, Media and Sport in collaboration with the Arts Council England, English Heritage and Sport England" (ibid, p 2).

² ibid, p 18.

cardiovascular disease and management of other chronic diseases.³

However, the report did highlight some evidence that sport could have a negative impact on health; this was through injuries and exposure to other negative health behaviours linked to “certain sporting environments”, for example alcohol and steroid use.⁴

The report also found “substantial evidence” of sport improving social behaviour, social cohesiveness, and educational outcomes:

[...] sports participation improves pro-social behaviour and reduces crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly for young men. The weight of evidence reviewed suggests a beneficial effect from sports participation on, for example, lower levels of recidivism, drunk driving, use of illegal drugs, crime and suspensions at school, property crime, shoplifting and juvenile crime [...]

In terms of the social capital impacts from sport, there is evidence that sport is a type of ‘social glue’, particularly for bonding capital. Positive outcomes in studies include reduced social and ethnic tensions, and more collective action and community involvement through sport, particularly volunteering [...]

There is considerable evidence of the positive effect of sport and exercise on educational outcomes, including psychological benefits and cognitive benefits. In turn, sport and exercise have been shown to have positive effects on a number of final outcomes, including educational attainment.⁵

However, as with the connections to health, the report did highlight evidence suggesting team sports could lead to higher alcohol use.⁶ In addition, there was some evidence of links to increased violent behaviour (particularly among younger people or those participating in boxing or weightlifting).⁷

Overall, the report found evidence of the positive impact sport could bring in multiple areas simultaneously, suggesting it can make it a “highly cost-effective intervention”.⁸

³ Culture and Sport Evidence Programme, [A Review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport](#), March 2015, p 22.

⁴ *ibid*, p 26.

⁵ *ibid*, p 18.

⁶ *ibid*, p 43.

⁷ *ibid*, pp 43–4.

⁸ *ibid*, p 18.

It argued:

Many of the links between sport and different social impacts are common, including greater physical competence, better cognitive skills, better social skills, trust and reciprocity, and identification with social values. These help to counteract risk factors and stimulate favourable reaction to protective factors.⁹

Arts

The report found strong evidence demonstrating positive associations between participation in arts and health, social capital, crime and education.

It stated that the “best evidenced” relationship in its study related to social capital, finding that “cultural participation can contribute to community cohesion, reduce social exclusion, and/or make communities feel safer and stronger”.¹⁰ However, regarding social exclusion, it did stress that some evidence had highlighted that arts participation may “vary systematically by class, employment and income”.¹¹ Despite this, the report said there was evidence arts may help bring people from different backgrounds together, promoting the social inclusion of groups such as “asylum seekers and refugees, disabled people and young people at risk”.

Regarding health and wellbeing, the review cited evidence of both clinical and non-clinical benefits. It found there was “limited” evidence that organised arts programmes could benefit those suffering from certain conditions, such as:

Those suffering from certain physical and mental health problems or conditions such as stroke, age related cognitive decline and those with mental health needs and significant mental health difficulties.¹²

The report added that therapeutic health benefits of arts programmes may arise through the social interactions and the development of skills, both of which can “bolster confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy”.¹³ Existing evidence of the links to general wellbeing were found to be weaker, but the report found it may improve social awareness and provide opportunities to bring communities together or create more “positive environments”.¹⁴ The report also highlighted two “promising” studies on the links between health

⁹ Culture and Sport Evidence Programme, [A Review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport](#), March 2015, p 18.

¹⁰ *ibid*, p 67.

¹¹ *ibid*, p 85.

¹² *ibid*, p 69.

¹³ *ibid*.

¹⁴ *ibid*, p 73.

and wellbeing from Italy and the UK:

In one national survey, in Italy, cultural access ranked as the second most important determinant of psychological wellbeing. The second study used surveys at six UK arts for health projects to demonstrate that arts-related participation contributes to personal development and self-perceptions of wellbeing.¹⁵

Regarding crime, the review said that most of the evidence focused on arts programmes for offenders, which showed “beneficial effects on intermediate outcomes such as communication skills, teamwork and self-concepts; important antecedents for a reduced likelihood of re-offending”.¹⁶ However, it stressed that evidence of actual reductions in offending rates as a result of arts participation was “much less prevalent”.

1.2 Sport England

Sport England have highlighted the societal benefits of sport and increased involvement, arguing that:

Boosting participation in sport can generate a variety of socio-economic benefits. Sport can, and does, make a profound and positive impact on individuals, communities and wider society.¹⁷

In terms of the social benefits, Sport England has set out some key findings from published evidence, including:

- Young people’s participation in sport improves their numeracy scores by 8% on average above non-participants.
- Underachieving young people who take part in sport see a 29% increase in numeracy skills and a 12 to 16% rise in other transferable skills.
- Returns on investment in sports programmes for at-risk youth are estimated at £7.35 of social benefit for every £1 spent—through financial savings to police, the criminal justice system and the community.¹⁸

It also referred to the benefit of sport in relation to education, crime reduction and community safety, and social cohesion.

¹⁵ Culture and Sport Evidence Programme, [A Review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport](#), March 2015, p 67.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Sport England, [‘Benefits of Sport’](#), accessed 7 December 2018.

¹⁸ Sport England, [‘Social Value of Sport’](#), accessed 7 December 2018.

Turning to the suggested health benefits, there was “good scientific evidence that being physically active can help us lead healthier lives”.¹⁹ It stressed that physical activity could reduce the risk of many chronic conditions, including “coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions”. It also noted that studies had shown that people who were “regularly active” had lower mortality rates than those who were less active. In addition, regarding the mental health benefits of physical activity, physical activity had been shown to be effective for reducing depression, anxiety and other psychological or emotion distress:

A review of research on this topic found that low-to-moderate physical exercise, even in a single session, can reduce anxiety. Another year-long study concluded that increases in aerobic fitness have both short and long-term beneficial effects on psychological health. Research also shows taking part in sport, and spectating, have a positive impact on the wellbeing and happiness of individuals.²⁰

Sport England also referred to work by Public Health England on the topic; for example: [‘Health Matters: Getting Every Adult Active Every Day’](#), 19 July 2016.

1.3 Arts Council England

Outlining the importance of art and culture, the Arts Council England (ACE) states:

Art and culture enhance every part of our lives. They bring us joy, and help us to make sense of our own experiences and to empathise with others. This is what we cherish.

Art and culture also give us other benefits. They benefit us economically, socially, and educationally—from the future prospects of our children, to the vibrancy of our cities, to the contribution made to economic growth.²¹

It noted evidence suggesting that art could bring benefits for tackling health conditions, estimating that art-based projects could “already be saving the NHS £500 million a year” in terms of reduced demand for GP or mental health services. It also highlighted evidence showing:

- Frequent engagement with art and culture is associated with a

¹⁹ Sport England, [‘Sport and Health’](#), accessed 7 December 2018.

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Arts Council England, [‘The Case for Art and Culture: Health and Wellbeing’](#), accessed 7 December 2018.

- higher level of subjective wellbeing.
- People who had attended a cultural place or event in the previous twelve months were almost 60 percent more likely to report good health compared to those who had not.
 - Studies have shown that specially-designed art activities can have a positive impact on health conditions like dementia, depression and Parkinson's disease.
 - People value spectating at art events at about £2,000 per person per year—and taking part at £1,500 per person.
 - Engagement in structured art and culture improves the cognitive abilities of children and young people.
 - Art activities enable people in social care to pursue creative interests, reducing loneliness and alleviating depression and anxiety among people in these environments.²²

Turning to the projected social benefits of art and culture, Arts Council England stressed it could bring communities together and combat social exclusion.²³ It highlighted evidence of a range of further benefits, including greater engagement in society:

- 76% of older people say art and culture is important in making them feel happy;
- 57% say art and culture is important in helping them meet other people; and
- 60% say it is important in encouraging them to get out and about.

It continued:

- High school students who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer than those who don't engage in the arts.
- High school students who engage in the arts are also 20 percent more likely to vote as young adults.
- Students who study art subjects are more employable and more likely to stay in employment.
- Culture and sport volunteers are more likely to be involved and influential in their local communities.²⁴

²² Arts Council England, '[The Case for Art and Culture: Health and Wellbeing](#)', accessed 7 December 2018.

²³ Arts Council England, '[The Case for Art and Culture: Society](#)', accessed 7 December 2018.

²⁴ *ibid.*

1.4 Further Reading

Further information relating to the societal benefits of sport, recreational activities and arts and culture can be found in the following material:

- All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, [Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing](#), July 2017
- Arts and Humanities Research Council, [Understanding the Value of Arts and Culture](#), March 2016
- Sport and Recreation Alliance, [Reconomics Plus: The Economic, Health and Social Value of Outdoor Recreation](#), February 2017

2. UK Wellbeing: Statistics

UK Measuring National Wellbeing Programme

As part of its Measuring National Wellbeing programme, launched in 2010, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) collates a range of information on wellbeing in the UK. The most recent publication, providing data for the period June 2017 to June 2018, reported the following average ratings for its four personal wellbeing measures in the UK:

- 7.7 out of 10 for life satisfaction;
- 7.9 out of 10 for feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile;
- 7.5 out of 10 for happiness yesterday; and
- 2.9 out of 10 for anxiety yesterday.²⁵

This represented no overall change compared to the previous year, but the report did find a lower proportion of people with low happiness ratings and a higher proportion of people reporting very low anxiety levels. Comparing UK regions, it found that Northern Ireland had the highest average ratings across all the personal wellbeing measures, and Wales had the highest proportion of people reporting “poor” personal wellbeing. Looking at trends over time, the report found:

Between the years ending June 2012 and June 2018, for all measures of personal wellbeing in the UK:

- The proportion of people reporting “poor” ratings decreased.
- The proportion of those reporting “very good” ratings increased. “Very good” ratings rose faster than “poor” ratings”, suggesting

²⁵ Office for National Statistics, [Personal Well-being in the UK: July 2017 to June 2018](#), 28 November 2018.

that the improvement for those people struggling the most has been slower over time.²⁶

As to how this compares to other countries, in 2017 the ONS stated that the UK is “positioned around the middle of the distribution of countries for the majority of wellbeing measures” (when compared to EU or OECD countries).²⁷ For example, it found that the UK’s life satisfaction of 6.5 (in 2015) was the same level as the OECD average, and was similar to France and Spain; the highest-ranked countries were Norway and Switzerland (7.6), while Portugal was the lowest-ranked (5.1).

Wellbeing across different age groups in the UK was considered in an ONS report published in April 2018. This reported the following key findings:

- Younger people (mainly aged 16 to 24) were more likely to report higher ratings of satisfaction with their health and engage in physical activities. The main challenges for younger people include unemployment, loneliness, having someone to rely on and a lack of sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.
- People in their early and middle years (mainly aged 25 to 54) were generally more likely to be in employment, but less likely to be satisfied with their leisure time.
- Older people (mainly aged 75 and over) were more likely to be satisfied with their income, leisure time, feel they can cope financially and belong to their neighbourhood. The main challenges for older people are lower satisfaction with their health and lower engagement with an art or cultural activity.²⁸

The ONS also maintains a [dashboard of further statistics](#) relating to wellbeing, including trends over time. This includes data on:²⁹

- **Loneliness:** In 2015/16, 5.4% of people aged 16 or over in England reported regular feelings of loneliness.
- **Health satisfaction:** In 2015 to 2016, 51% of people aged 16 and over in the UK were mostly or completely satisfied with their health.
- **Satisfaction with leisure time:** The proportion of people aged 16 and over in the UK who satisfied with their amount of leisure time was 44.6% in 2015 to 2016.

²⁶ Office for National Statistics, [Personal Well-being in the UK: July 2017 to June 2018](#), 28 November 2018.

²⁷ Office for National Statistics, [Measuring National Well-being in the UK: International Comparisons, 2017](#), 9 March 2017.

²⁸ Office for National Statistics, [Measuring National Well-being: Quality of Life in the UK, 2018](#), 25 April 2018.

²⁹ Office for National Statistics, [Measures of National Well-being Dashboard](#), 17 May 2018.

- **Sense of belonging to neighbourhood:** Those aged 16 and over in the UK who agreed they felt they belonged to their neighbourhood in 2014 to 2015 was 68.8%.

3. Engagement in Sport and Culture: Statistics

3.1 Office for National Statistics

The dashboard of wellbeing statistics published by the ONS includes the following data on arts and culture and sport participation levels in 2017, with both showing no change compared to previous years:

- In the year ending March 2017, just over 8 in 10 people in England (82.2%) had participated in an arts or cultural activity at least three times in the past year. This has remained unchanged over both the short-term (82.1% in the year ending March 2016) and the long-term (83.9% in the year ending March 2012).
- Over 6 in 10 adults aged 16 and over in England took part in at least 150 minutes of sport and physical activities a week between November 2016 and November 2017 (61.8%). There was no overall change since the previous year (62.1%).³⁰

The ONS has also published statistics on the leisure time of individuals in the UK, which includes time spent: socialising; doing cultural activities; resting and taking time out; taking part in sport or outdoor pursuits; hobbies, computing and games; mass media (eg TV); and eating out. The latest release, covering 2015, found that there were differences in leisure time by demographic group.³¹ For example, it found that:

- Men used more leisure time than women (an average of 6 hours and 9 minutes compared with 5 hours and 29 minutes per day respectively);
- People in South East England used the most leisure time, and people in Northern Ireland used the least;
- People aged 65 and over used the most leisure time (7 hours and 10 minutes per day); 50% more than 25- to 34-year olds, who took the least leisure time (4 hours and 46 minutes per day); and
- Leisure time varied by occupation and income, with skilled trade professionals having less leisure time than sales and customer service professionals, and those on lower incomes being less likely to use weekends for leisure time (due to working commitments).

³⁰ Office for National Statistics, [Measures of National Well-being Dashboard](#), 17 May 2018. Note: Figures on long-term trends are not available in regards to participation in sport.

³¹ Office for National Statistics, [Leisure Time in the UK: 2015](#), 24 October 2017.

The most popular use of leisure time, across both sexes, was mass media, which amounted to averagely 15 hours a week.³² This was then followed by socialising (for women: 4.3 hours a week), and hobbies, computing or games (for men: 4.5 hours a week). Just under an hour on average a week was spent on cultural activities (by both sexes) and playing sport/physical activity made up 2.5 hours a week for men and 1.8 hours a week for women.

3.2 Active Lives Survey

The *Active Lives* surveys, carried out by Sport England, measure the activity levels of adults and children across England. This briefing focuses on information in the adult survey, which covers those aged over 16.³³ The fourth edition of the adult survey, published in October 2018, covered May 2017 to May 2018.³⁴ It set out:

- Activities undertaken, broken down by locations and demographic groups;
- Volunteering levels to support sport and physical activity; and
- Links between engaging in sport or physical activity and social outcomes (as identified in the government strategy, *Sporting Future*³⁵).

Activities

The report found that 62.3% (28 million) of people were “active” (classed as, at least, over 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week), 12.5% (5.6 million) were “fairly active” (at least 30 to 149 minutes of moderate activity a week), and 25.2% (11.3 million) were “inactive” (under 30 minutes of moderate activity).³⁶ The report also found that:³⁷

- Men were more likely to be “active” than women (65% compared to 60%);
- Those in lower socio-economic groups were more likely to be “inactive”;
- Those with a disability or health condition were more likely to be “inactive” than those without (42% compared to 21%);
- Inactivity grew with age, with particularly large differences appearing between the upper age groups: 65 to 74

³² Office for National Statistics, [Leisure Time in the UK: 2015](#), 24 October 2017.

³³ The children’s survey, covering those aged 5 to 16, was published in December 2018: Sport England, [Active Lives: Children and Young People Survey, 2017/18](#), December 2018.

³⁴ Sport England, [Active Lives, Adult Survey: May 17/18](#), October 2018.

³⁵ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, ‘[Sporting Future](#)’, 17 December 2015. This strategy is discussed further in section 4.1 of this briefing.

³⁶ Sport England, [Active Lives, Adult Survey: May 17/18](#), October 2018, p 4.

³⁷ *ibid*, p 6.

- (29% “inactive”), 75 to 84 (47%) and 85+ (71%); and
- Activity varied by ethnicity, with those from a “mixed” background most likely to be “active” (71%) and those from a south Asian background least likely (55%).

Looking at activities undertaken by individuals at least twice in the last month, the most prominent physical activities, in order, were:³⁸

- Walking: for leisure (19.2 million) and for travel (14.8 million);
- Fitness activities (13.4 million);
- Running/athletics (6.9 million);
- Cycling: for leisure/sport (6.2 million) and for travel (3.1 million);
- Swimming (4.5 million);
- Team sports (3.1 million);
- Adventure sports (2.7 million); and
- Racket sports (2.2 million).

The figures showed an increase in the number of people walking or involved in adventure sports since the previous year. However, there was a decrease in the number swimming, engaged in team sports or racket sports and cycling for leisure or sport.

Volunteering

The report stressed the importance of volunteering to support sports and physical activities, saying that:

Whether it’s serving refreshments, coaching a player or assisting people with disabilities to take part, the sport and activity sector needs people to give their time.³⁹

The report found that 14% (6.3 million) of adults were volunteering to support sport and physical activity, principally through providing transport, coaching, and administrative work.⁴⁰ However, this was a decrease of 400,000 volunteers from the previous year.⁴¹ The report provides breakdowns of volunteering by gender, socio-economic group, age, ethnicity and disability status. For example, the report found that 41% of volunteers were in the 16 to 24 or 45 to 54 age groups, despite these only accounting for 30% of the population.⁴²

³⁸ Sport England, [Active Lives, Adult Survey: May 17/18](#), October 2018, p 8.

³⁹ *ibid*, p 9.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, p 10.

⁴¹ *ibid*, p 11.

⁴² *ibid*, p 15.

Links to Wellbeing

The report found that those who were more active also reported a higher life satisfaction; on average, “active” people had a life satisfaction score of 7.2, “fairly active” people had a score of 7.0, and “inactive” people had a score of 6.6.⁴³ It also found that those who were active and were volunteering had higher scores across the mental wellbeing measures, and that volunteering increased social trust and a feeling of positive links with the community.⁴⁴

3.3 Taking Part Survey

The *Taking Part* survey is a regular household survey in England which measures engagement with the cultural sectors.⁴⁵ This includes the arts, museums and galleries, heritage sector, libraries, and television.

The latest survey report covered the 2017/18 financial year.⁴⁶ It found that 78.9% of adults had engaged with the arts at least once in the previous twelve months (this includes engagement or participation with theatre, dance, carnivals, exhibitions, book clubs etc).⁴⁷ This was only marginally higher than the previous year, and was 3.6% higher than the rate first recorded in 2005/06. Further breakdowns indicated that women were more likely to have engaged with the arts than men, engagement was higher for higher socio-economic groups, and disabled people were less likely to have engaged with the arts (although the levels of disabled people who had engaged with the arts was continuing to rise).⁴⁸ It also found significant increases in engagement among those aged 65 to 74 and 75+.

In terms of attendance at museums or galleries, the report found that 49.7% of people had attended one in the last twelve months.⁴⁹ This was an increase on the figure in 2005/06 (42.3%) but marked a decrease from the peak engagement rates in 2013/14 (53.1%). Engagement was broadly similar for each age group between 16 to 24 and 65 to 74 years but was lower for those aged 75+. Again, engagement was higher for those in higher socio-economic groups and for those without a disability or health condition, and there were significant differences in terms of geographic engagement:

In 2017/18, the proportion of adults who had visited a museum or gallery in the twelve months prior to interview varied from 42.0% in

⁴³ Sport England, [Active Lives, Adult Survey: May 17/18](#), October 2018, p 19.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, pp 20–1.

⁴⁵ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, ‘[Taking Part Survey](#)’, 31 August 2016.

⁴⁶ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Taking Part Survey: England—Adult Report, 2017/18](#), 30 August 2018.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, p 3.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, pp 4–5.

⁴⁹ *ibid*, p 9.

the West Midlands to 56.6% in the North East (56.6%). Engagement with museums and galleries was lower in 2017/18 than in 2005/06 for London, and higher for all other regions except the East and West Midlands, and the East of England. The greatest increase was in the North West where the engagement rate increased from 40.4% in 2005/06 to 56.5% in 2017/18.

Engagement levels in 2017/18 fell for two of the nine regions compared to 2016/17: London (-13.3 percentage points) and the East of England (-9.8 percentage points). There was a significant increase in engagement levels in the North East (11.5 percentage points), the region with amongst the lowest levels of engagement in 2016/17.⁵⁰

In total, 31.4% said they had not attended an arts event in the twelve months prior to the 2017/18 interview, 46.6% of adults had not undertaken at least one arts activity in the same period and 49.9% had not visited a museum or gallery. In this context, the report also considered barriers to engagement.⁵¹ It found:

Lack of interest and time were the main reasons respondents gave for not engaging with arts, heritage and museums [...] The proportion of people citing a health problem or disability as a barrier was four times higher for arts events (22.5%) than libraries (5.8%), and more than one in ten cited it as a barrier for all other sectors. Feeling out of place was a concern for fewer than 5% of those who did not attend arts events or participate in arts activities.⁵²

4. Policy

4.1 Sport Participation

Overview

The two main central government bodies dealing with sporting participation in England are:⁵³

- **Sport England:** whose goal is to increase the number of people who play sport regularly; and
- **UK Sport:** who support Britain's Olympic and Paralympic sports and athletes and coordinates the bids for staging major

⁵⁰ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Taking Part Survey: England—Adult Report, 2017/18](#), 30 August 2018, p 11.

⁵¹ *ibid*, p 16.

⁵² *ibid*.

⁵³ National Audit Office, [Short Guide to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#), October 2017, p 25.

international sporting events in the UK.

In 2016/17, these bodies received £160 million of grant-in-aid funding to support their duties (£54 million for UK Sport and £106 million for Sport England); this represented an increase on the previous three years, but was lower than the funding provided in 2012/13 (when it was £166 million).⁵⁴ In addition, together these bodies received an additional £277 million of lottery funding in 2016/17. Funding is also provided at local authority level; in 2015, the Government highlighted estimates showing local authorities to be the “biggest public sector investor in sport and physical activity, spending over £1 billion per year (excluding capital spend)”.⁵⁵

The rest of this section will focus primarily on the work of Sport England. However, [information on the work of UK Sport](#) can be found on its website, including the announced funding for each Olympic or Paralympic sport for the [2017–19 funding cycle](#).

Sporting Future

In December 2015, the Government launched its *Sporting Future* strategy, aimed at tackling the “flatlining levels of sport participation” and the “high levels” of inactivity in the UK.⁵⁶ Concentrating on five outcomes—physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development—the report set out central and local government measures to encourage greater participation, including:⁵⁷

- Distribution of funding to focus on those people who tend not to take part in sport (eg women and girls, disabled people, those in lower socio-economic groups and older people);
- Better measurement of outcomes, primarily through the *Active Lives* survey and a series of key performance indicators; and
- Making the sporting sector “more resilient”, through governance changes and reducing the “reliance” on public funding.

The Government published its second update on the *Sporting Future* strategy in January 2018.⁵⁸ It set out the progress made under a range of headings,

⁵⁴ National Audit Office, [Short Guide to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#), October 2017, p 26.

⁵⁵ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Sporting Future—A New Strategy for an Active Nation](#), 17 December 2015, pp 12–13.

⁵⁶ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport website, ‘[Sporting Future—A New Strategy for an Active Nation](#)’, 17 December 2015.

⁵⁷ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Sporting Future—A New Strategy for an Active Nation](#), 17 December 2015, pp 10–11.

⁵⁸ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Sporting Future: Second Annual Report](#), January 2018.

including:

- **Cross-government working:** For example, the report highlighted the establishment of an inter-ministerial group on healthy living, bringing together government departments to consider how sport and physical activity could be made “more widely accessible, so that they benefit everyone”.⁵⁹
- **Change in participation approach:** The report stated that Sport England had:

Fundamentally re-designed its investment framework to place the five outcomes at the core of its investment decisions. It is placing much greater emphasis on gathering and using insight about what people want from sport and physical activity and has significantly broadened the range of organisations it works with.⁶⁰

It also highlighted the launch of twelve local delivery pilot areas (focusing on the issue of inactivity in specific areas/communities by bringing together a broad range of organisations such as schools, GPs and leisure centres) and further funding for county sports partnerships (local partnerships focused on the delivery and understanding of sport and physical activity in an area).⁶¹
- **Sports Governance:** The report discussed the *Code for Sports Governance*, published by UK Sport and Sport England in October 2016, which set out the “governance requirements that organisations in receipt of public investment must comply with, including gender diversity on boards, transparency in decision-making, and robust constitutional arrangements”.⁶² It reported that 55 of 58 national governing bodies were compliant with the code by December 2017, with the remaining three taking action to be compliant by April 2018.

Other sections in the report covered: anti-doping; duty of care and safeguarding; major sporting events; safe stadia; elite sport; the sporting workforce; and the sporting economy.

⁵⁹ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Sporting Future: Second Annual Report](#), January 2018, pp 6–7.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, p 9.

⁶¹ *ibid*, pp 8–11.

⁶² *ibid*, p 12.

Sport England

Sport England's current strategy document covers 2016 to 2021 and was published in May 2016.⁶³ It set out a range of measures to help achieve the aims set out in the Government's *Sporting Future* strategy. These included:⁶⁴

- Focusing more resources on tackling inactivity;
- Investing more in children, so as to build positive attitudes to sport and physical activity at an early stage;
- Helping sport keep pace with digital expectations of customers; and
- Working with a broader range of partners, including stronger local collaboration.

The report also set out details as to how Sport England would work to meet its challenges, including how it would: invest funds; work with young people and volunteers; work with partners; and improve local delivery. For example, the report set out seven "investment principles", such as ensuring investment benefits under-represented groups, regularly reviewing Sport England's investment portfolio, and focusing resources on increased efficiency.⁶⁵

Its most recent annual report, covering 2017/18, summarised some of Sport England's achievements over the previous twelve months.⁶⁶ In addition to those mentioned previously (eg investment in local delivery pilots and county sports partnerships), these included:⁶⁷

- New data initiatives, including [OpenActive](#), which uses "open data and startup innovation to get more people active";
- Awarding 44 national governing bodies of sport funding for talent programmes, and supporting Team England's preparations for the 2018 Commonwealth Games with a £4 million investment; and
- Extending its partnership with Mind to help people with mental health problems get active and partnering with Public Health England to "better educate and support healthcare professionals to promote physical activity".

Sport England offers a range of funding, including targeted funding for certain initiatives such as the 'tackling inactivity and economic disadvantage' fund.⁶⁸

⁶³ Sport England, [Towards an Active Nation: Strategy 2016–2021](#), 19 May 2016.

⁶⁴ *ibid*, p 6.

⁶⁵ *ibid*, pp 10–11.

⁶⁶ Sport England, [Annual Report and Accounts](#), 5 July 2018.

⁶⁷ *ibid*, p 9.

⁶⁸ *ibid*, p 20.

Individuals can apply for funding by contacting the organisation; this may include requests for small grants and funding through the community asset fund (a programme dedicated to enhancing local community spaces for sports and fitness).⁶⁹ Regarding funding provided in 2017/18, Sport England stated it:

Awarded £86.3 million (2016–17: £86.1 million) of exchequer awards and £144.8 million (2016–17: £208.1 million) of lottery awards during the year. We provided £1.8 million (2016–17: £4.9 million) of lottery non-cash grants for the club development tool, Club Matters and the This Girl Can campaign, and £3.4 million (2016–17: £3.0 million) expenditure on the national sports centres.⁷⁰

4.2 Engagement with the Arts

Culture White Paper

In its white paper on culture, published in March 2016, the Government stressed the importance of arts and culture to society:

The cultural sectors are already an immensely important part of our economy and society. We know that investment in culture not only has immense economic value; it also has a wide range of benefits that touch all our lives every day. We can see the difference that culture has on children’s education, and we are beginning to understand better the profound relationship between culture, health and wellbeing.

Everyone should have the chance to experience culture, participate in it, create it, and see their lives transformed by it.⁷¹

The paper set out four objectives to build upon the role of culture in the UK, focusing on access to the arts, benefiting communities, investment and resilience, and improving the UK’s international standing. The white paper committed to working with the Arts Council England to improve diversity in the arts and to remove barriers affecting under-represented groups,⁷² and announced measures to improve community links, including:

- Further support for the UK city of culture programme (which has seen Coventry named 2021 city of culture);⁷³
- Introducing the great place scheme, which is “designed to pilot

⁶⁹ Sport England, ‘[Funding](#)’, accessed 11 December 2018.

⁷⁰ *ibid*, p 12.

⁷¹ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Culture White Paper](#), March 2016, Cm 9218.

⁷² *ibid*, pp 21–7.

⁷³ Mark Brown, ‘[Coventry Named UK City of Culture 2021](#)’, *Guardian*, 7 December 2017.

new approaches that enable cultural and community groups to work more closely together and to place heritage at the heart of communities”;⁷⁴ and

- Encouraging more local cultural partnerships (made up of local authorities, universities, local services, volunteering organisations etc) to plan and implement cultural development.⁷⁵

Arts Council England: Funding

The main body for arts support and funding in England is the Arts Council England (ACE). It has announced the following spending for the period 2018 to 2022:

- £408 million per year in 829 arts organisations, museums and libraries in our national portfolio. This will include £340 million of grant-in-aid and £68 million of National Lottery funding.
- £97.3 million of National Lottery funding per year in Arts Council National Lottery project grants, our open-access funding programme.
- £72.2 million per year in our Arts Council development funds which will focus on diversity, resilience, innovation in business models, leadership development and creating more pathways for a wider range of people to become part of the arts and culture sector.⁷⁶

The following table shows funding by region for 2018 to 2022. The largest recipient, by some way, is London (the funding for London is roughly equivalent to the funding levels of the next four largest recipients combined):

Figure: Arts Council England Funding by Region

Region	Annualised Funding (£ millions)
London	165.17
West Midlands	53.44
North West	42.50
Yorkshire	39.38
South West	27.45
South East	22.18
North East	21.50
East	19.59
East Midlands	17.05

⁷⁴ [Great Place Scheme website](#), accessed 11 December 2018.

⁷⁵ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Culture White Paper](#), March 2016, Cm 9218, pp 32–9.

⁷⁶ Arts Council England, [‘How We Invest Public Money’](#), accessed 11 December 2018.

However, when announcing ACE's funding for 2018 to 2022, the chair of the body, Sir Nicholas Serota, did state that the geographical differences in funding had already been rebalanced slightly, as it recognised the need for more funding in other regions, whilst still ensuring London "continues to thrive".⁷⁷ As a result, it was reported that some of London's attractions, such as the Southbank Centre and the Royal Opera House, were seeing a 3 to 4 percent reduction in subsidies.

In addition, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport directly funds 16 museums and galleries (and the British Library), such as the British Museum and the National Gallery.⁷⁸

Arts Council England: Reports and Strategy

The current ACE strategy covers the period 2010 to 2020 and features five goals:

- excellence;
- for everyone;
- resilience and sustainability;
- diversity and skills; and
- young people.⁷⁹

For example, under the goal 'for everyone', ACE explains:

When developing their business plans, our national portfolio organisations are asked to consider how they will reach people who are the least engaged with art and culture. We also use our strategic funds for arts, museums and libraries to invest in areas where attendance and participation levels are low.⁸⁰

Further details on each of the goals can be found in the organisation's annual report. The latest, covering 2017/18, included information on the following programmes and initiatives:⁸¹

- **Creative case for diversity scheme:** whereby applicants were required to demonstrate how the work they planned to produce, present and distribute reflected the diversity of wider

⁷⁷ BBC News, '[Arts Funding: Major English Venues Cut, With More Money for the Regions](#)', 27 June 2017.

⁷⁸ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, '[Strategic Review of DCMS-sponsored Museums](#)', 14 November 2017.

⁷⁹ Arts Council England, '[Our Mission and Strategy](#)', accessed 11 December 2018.

⁸⁰ Arts Council England, '[Engaging People Everywhere](#)', accessed 11 December 2018.

⁸¹ Arts Council England, '[Annual Report and Accounts](#)', 19 July 2018, pp 17–34.

- society;
- **Creative people and places:** programme targeting areas and individuals less involved with the arts (ACE has estimated that 91 percent of its audience comes from areas with low and medium levels of arts engagement⁸²); and
 - **Celebrating age projects:** joint programme, with the Baring Foundation, aimed at engaging those aged over 75 in arts and cultural activities.

The Arts Council England is currently consulting on its new strategy for 2020–2030, which it aims to publish in autumn 2019.⁸³

4.3 Further Reading

The House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee is currently running an inquiry on the social impact of participation in culture and sport.⁸⁴ Evidence from the inquiry can be accessed on the [committee's website](#).

Further information on policy issues connected to arts and sport can be found in the following material:

- Sport and Recreation Alliance, [Sports Club Survey Report 2017/2018](#), 2018
- Sports Think Tank, '[Local Government Funding of Community Sport](#)', accessed 11 December 2018
- House of Lords Library, [Leaving the European Union: The Arts](#), 4 October 2018

⁸² Arts Council England, '[Creative People and Places](#)', accessed 11 December 2018.

⁸³ Arts Council England, '[Our Next Strategy: The Timeline](#)', accessed 11 December 2018.

⁸⁴ House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, '[Inquiry on the Social Impact of Participation in Culture and Sport](#)', accessed 11 December 2018.