



# Towards a Model of Asset-based Cultural Prescribing



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# Context

- Communities have a role to play in reducing health inequalities
- Focusing on assets available within communities provides a vehicle to strengthen resilience and reduce inequalities
- Social prescribing links primary health care users with assets within their community



# Community assets

“Assets are any resource, skill or knowledge which enhances the ability of individuals, families and neighbourhoods to sustain their health and wellbeing” (Foot 2012).





# Cultural assets



“In every community, there are cultural factors that contribute to the vitality and robustness of the people living there. These factors are shared and creative, which is to say they are cultural and they are assets that make life valuable, that make life worth living”

*(Prof Ross Gibson)*





- Cultural assets can be **material**, **immaterial**, **emotional**, or even **spiritual**.
- 'Solid' things like concert halls, galleries, gardens, parklands and stadiums.
- Rooted in the natural environment which encourage particular types of cultural activities.
- Or the climate itself which encourages special kinds of creative and communal activities that bind people together in a place over time.



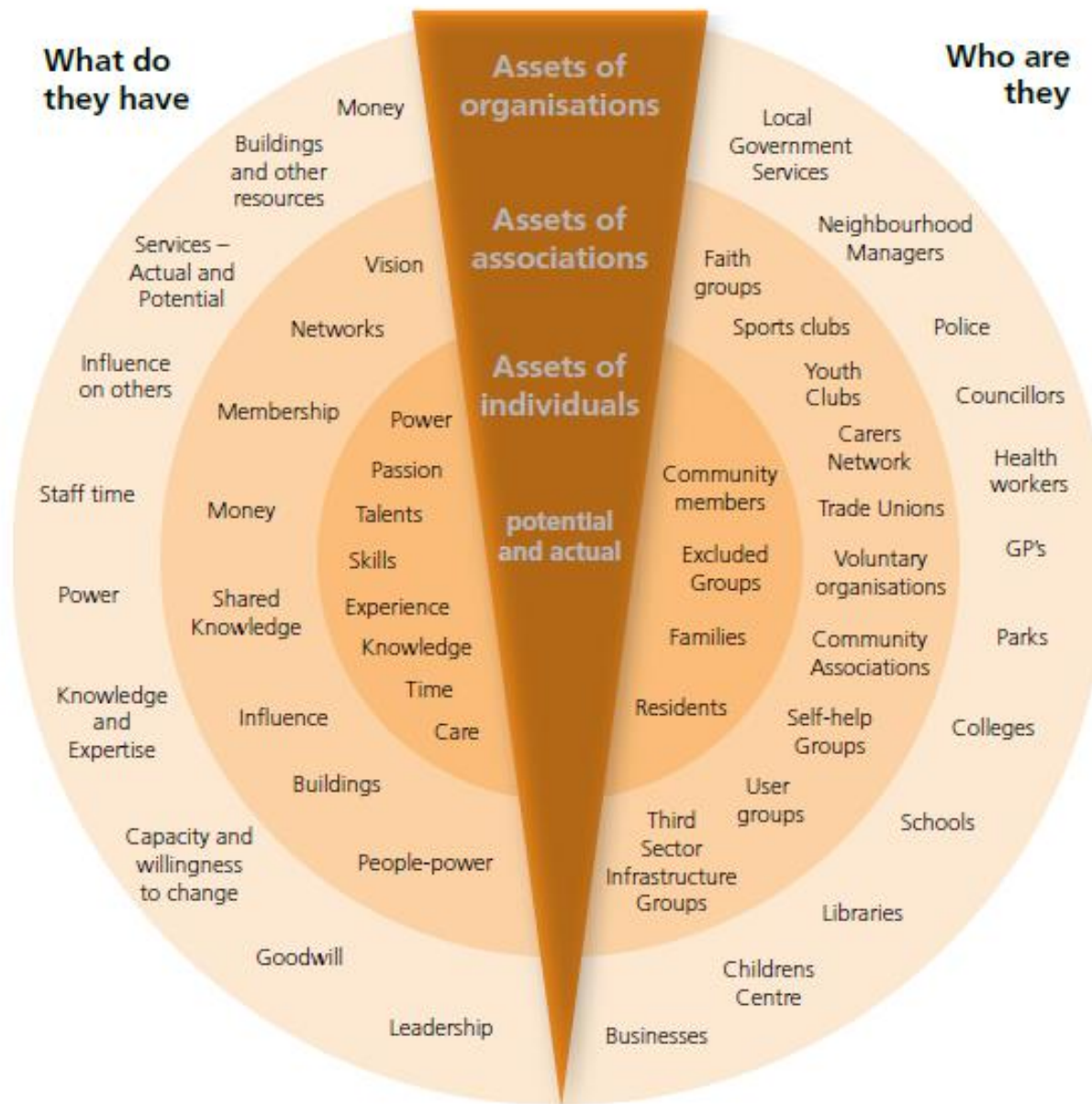


# What are assets?

- Skills of local community members
- Power of local community
- Physical buildings
- Physical and economic resources
- Supportive and healthy relationships and networks



## Asset mapping





**Arts on prescription models**







Arts on prescription, social prescribing or arts for health models are non-medical initiatives which aim to improve or increase health outcomes





Social prescribing models complement the government's current policy on tackling health inequalities and their ambition to reduce healthcare costs, while simultaneously enhance the quality and sustainability of the NHS

Growing evidence of link between cultural and creative engagement and happiness



Increasing number of models being piloted and evaluated across the UK, often aimed at individuals with mild to moderate mental health problems and those suffering from long-term health conditions.

Reported outcomes include: reductions in depression and anxiety and improvements in mental wellbeing and social inclusion.



**Asset mapping**







**Community asset mapping** in Wirral and Cheshire East focussing on health and wellbeing

**Cultural asset mapping** ongoing in Blackpool and inner city Liverpool and linking with health and wellbeing gains





## **Mapping**

- Database
- Thematic analysis
- Identification of assets for evaluation

## **Identifying value**

Generating evidence on the impact and value created by assets



# **Community asset impacts**

**Positive impact** on individuals and their  
community

3 main themes emerged, related to:

**Social**

**Learning of new skills**

**Mental health and wellbeing**



# Social

**Social aspect** - meeting new people, gaining new friendships and social inclusion were some of the many gains identified, all of which contribute to making resilient societies.

Increasing social capital

- *Confidence*
- *Self-esteem*







# New skills

Through assets, many people gained new skills which improved their life and resulted in many positive health and wellbeing gains. This often led to new opportunities and resulted in volunteering and work opportunities.

**Empower** individuals, improve confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.

**Motivation** – all had a personal story that inspired them to want to improve others' lives.

# Mental health and wellbeing



Those volunteering or engaging with assets looked forward to the social interaction; they felt better about themselves, and experienced many health and wellbeing gains, including increased mobility, exercise and in some cases reduction in reliance on healthcare including medication and GP appointments.





# Blackpool mapping

It is well documented that the arts are a major contributor to regeneration within communities and can act as a catalyst for economic growth. One way of positively promoting health and wellbeing is by engaging with the arts in a community-based setting in a bid to reduce reliance and burden on health care providers.





# Arts for Health

Arts for Health provides two creative courses (Back on track, creative pathways, creativity and walking group, mind and creativity, new horizons, archive group and Smartarts)

Since Jan 2013, a total of 242 individuals  
Increased confidence and motivation, better competence to cope with stress, made new friends, sense of comradeship, achievements personally and artistically and creatively





Arts for Health aims to give Blackpool residents an opportunity to: create and build social networks and therefore reduce social isolation; engage with cultural activities such as art galleries while being creative and learn new skills; increase self-esteem; and promote routine and add meaningfulness to the day. The sessions also provide opportunities to access other services.





Blackpool recognises the strength of its community sector and its evaluation of its Arts for Health service includes mapping of its cultural assets so that the service can support individuals once they have completed the creative workshops.

Mapping will identify all local cultural assets and will assess the potential impact the cultural sector has in supporting mental health and wellbeing





## **Joining the Dots – Mapping of cultural assets in Liverpool**





# Background

Four-year project to evidence the impact of Mersey Care NHS Trust's creative interventions, which include:

- Everton in the Community

- The Philharmonic - musician in residence

- The Reader Organisation

- The Tate

- Movema / LIPA







# Research aims

Mapping of all cultural assets in the inner Liverpool city area

Baseline data taken from exploratory research conducted ahead of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture in 2008.





# Methodology

Mapping: original database updated; new data added

Thematic analysis of categories

Selection of assets for impact evaluation

Survey of grassroots organisations

Working with Mersey Care NHS

Trust to understand impact of community engagement





Final work will provide a number of social value and impact case studies which will highlight the extent of Liverpool's cultural assets, locations, and assess their impact on the wider community.

Evidence the impact of the Capital of Culture year on grassroots organisations and assets.







# Summary



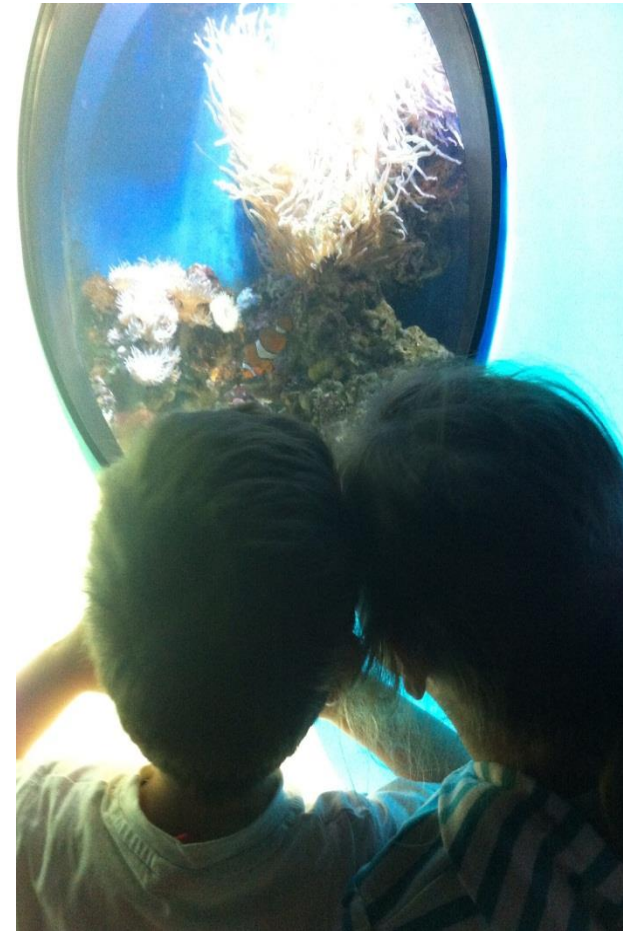


**Cultural and creative assets  
serve three functions:**

**Support social  
relationships**

**Encourage the learning of  
new skills and development  
of personal qualities**

**Improve mental health and  
wellbeing**





**Understanding where your assets are helps us understand more about our communities and the impact of assets on our health and culture. The impact of this work is beginning to be evidenced**







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