Place Making

* 1. Introduction

Place Making is one of the key themes of Hull 2017, made up of one aim and its accompanying objectives.

* **Aim 4: To improve perceptions of Hull as a place to live, work, study and visit**
  + Objective 7: Enhance the profile of Hull’s arts, culture and heritage offer through positive media coverage and marketing activity.
  + Objective 8: Increase the number of Hull residents who are proud to live in Hull and would speak positively about the city to others.
  + Objective 9: Improve external attitudes towards Hull.

‘Back to Ours’ will be evaluated in reference to these aims and objectives, as well as identifying additional outcome areas not covered in the above, but linked to the aims and objectives specific to the project (see Chapter 1).

* 1. Knowledge of Hull UK City of Culture 2017

The CPT were all asked questions that tested their prior knowledge of Hull UK City of Culture.

Of the two members of the CPT who responded to the pre-event questionnaire, one was an employee of Hull 2017, therefore knew Hull was UK City of Culture before they became involved in ‘Back to Ours’.

The other respondent was not an employee of Hull 2017, but was also aware that Hull was UK City of Culture prior to being involved in ‘Back to Ours’.

* 1. Personal Changes in Perceptions of Hull

1 in 2 CPT members that took part in the pre-event survey had a personal connection to Hull, the connection being that they currently live in Hull.

At both pre-delivery and post-festival 3, all of CPT members reported that as a result of their involvement in the project they would speak more positively about the city to others (2 out of 2 pre-delivery and 5 out of 5 post-festival 3).

Reasons for these changes linked to spending more time in communities and realising there is lots happening outside of the city centre and HU5 postcode area, along with a feeling that ‘Back to Ours’ would help to revive the city and change the attitudes of government as well as public.

*“I'm proud of the progress we've made with Back To Ours festival and it feels as if the festival is becoming increasingly embedded in the areas it's working in, to assist changes and changes in perception of those areas. I speak positively to people about Hull and my work here when I'm elsewhere in the country.” (CPT member)*

When asked whether they had learnt anything new about Hull and its people as a result of working on ‘Back to Ours’, one member of the CPT felt that the project had made them realise that there was an appetite for arts and cultural events even in the most deprived and disengaged areas of the city.

Another member of the team who wasn’t originally from the city, said that they had learnt more about the infrastructure of Hull and its neighbourhoods, which has helped them to understand more about the barriers that the communities face.

Audiences also reported how ‘Back to Ours’ particularly had opened their eyes to what Hull had to offer:

* 65.2% of audiences responding to the ‘Back to Ours’ post-event audience survey strongly agreed or agreed that there was ‘more to Hull than [they] had expected’; and
* Comparatively, 58% of audience at Hull 2017 events strongly agreed or agreed that there was ‘more to Hull than [they] had expected’.
  1. Changes in Regional and National Perceptions of Hull

Although the CPT had their own perceptions of the city challenged, opinions differed on whether ‘Back to Ours’ changed regional and national opinions of Hull.

1 of 5 CPT members selected agree and 1 of 5 strongly agree in response to the question:

‘Please mark a point on the scale that best represents your level of agreement with the following statement about Back to Ours:

Back to Ours has placed Hull nationally on the arts radar for the coming year.’

2 of 5 disagreed and 1 of 5 stated N/A / Don’t know.

This difference in opinion may be due to the focus of ‘Back to Ours’ being firmly on local neighbourhoods in Hull rather than the wider population.

* 1. Audience Response

The CPT had an aspiration to break down barriers to the arts and encourage local disengaged audiences to feel comfortable accessing events in their neighbourhoods.

In reflecting on the project, the CPT felt that ‘Back to Ours’ was successful in encouraging audiences to discover a new experience of the city whilst contributing to an overarching objective to showcase Hull’s community buildings and public spaces.

The feedback from audiences seemed to reflect these observations, with discussions around the change in perceptions of the ‘Back to Ours’ venues and feeling of being valued through their inclusion in the project.

These generated 3 key themes:

* Venue perceptions;
* Pride; and
* Inclusion.
  + 1. Venue Perceptions

Audience research indicated that ‘Back to Ours’ changed perceptions towards the performance venues themselves. The ‘Back to Ours’ venues were chosen because they were recognisable within the community, however many of the audience members had never had the chance to go inside, or had never seen them in this new capacity as a performance space. As such, some audience members welcomed the opportunity to explore buildings in their neighbourhoods.

*I would never come here otherwise, so it’s given us an opportunity to have a little look round.”*

*“I’ve never been to Hymers at all before. So it was interesting, it was… I was nosy to see what it was going to be like.”*

*(Chat with Gran: Audience Members)*

Some Venue Partners felt that there were negative preconceptions around their venue within the community and ‘Back to Ours’ helped to lift these. For example a staff member at Hymers felt that there was a stigma around the venue based around its private school status, and being involved in community events helped to challenge this.

Similarly, partners from North Point Shopping Centre felt that there was a feeling of negativity around the venue, however after attending a performance in the space, audience members said that they had seen the centre in a new light. The CPT considered these change in perceptions of the venues to be one of the main successes of the project.

*“The big success was the learning we that got from it and how impressed people were with the actual spaces.” (CPT Member)*

*“I’ve only ever been here by day before and it’s totally transformed it.” (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

*“This is really good and I don’t know whether it’s ever been used like this before…but be nice to see it used more often.”*

*(Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

One couple who saw a performance at the William Gemmel Club described the venue as ‘not the sort of place they would usually go’, but were delighted at the welcome they received from the club’s regulars.

*“From the minute we walked in there, we were made welcome by the people that were in there. And it was absolutely lovely.” (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

*“They got us a couple of chairs and a table, the people around it were all people that belonged to the club. And they were lovely people, and they really wanted us to enjoy it. You know it was lovely.” (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

* + 1. Pride

The research revealed a real sense of community pride that appeared to have been bolstered by Hull’s City of Culture status and the events of the wider artistic programme. During the audience research, when asked what they thought ‘Back to Ours’ meant for the community, responses included:

“*It makes you feel proud of where you’ve come from.” (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

*“Well it makes you proud doesn’t it, because everyone puts Hull down.” (Focus Group Respondent: Audience Member)*

*"I've always been proud of Hull, but this year, I'm more proud." (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

When talking about Hull and its UK City of Culture status, one group described themselves as ‘fiercely protective’ of their hometown and praised their local community. Audience survey results suggest that this community link has been somewhat strengthened by ‘Back to Ours’:

* 66.4% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘Back to Ours’ made me feel more connected to the local community here’; and
* 69% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘Back to Ours’ made me feel more connected with Hull and its people.

*“And we’re fiercely protective. Fiercely protective. Absolutely, we can say what we like but anybody else says anything about Hull, absolutely not.” (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

The sense of excitement around Hull 2017 and its artistic programme was clear in the audience feedback, particularly in the beginning of the year. Many audience members mentioned unprompted that they were trying to see as many City of Culture shows that they can and described the year’s events as an opportunity not to be missed. Many mentioned other City of Culture events they had attended and what they were looking forward to in the coming weeks.

*“You’ve gotta go for it when you’ve got something like this, it’s a once in a lifetime opportunity so you’ve gotta go for it.”*

*“We've been to loads this year, we're making the most out of it.”*

*(Chat with Gran: Audience Members)*

* + 1. Inclusion

It was discussed that areas outside of the city centre are often overlooked when it comes to arts and culture and that the local offer in was slim to non-existent. When asked what events they usually occur nearby, most respondents said that they would have to travel into the city centre if they wanted to attend arts and culture events.

*“You know, you see things going on around Town Centre, and you see things going on in West Hull, and you see nothing going on around here.” (Focus Group Respondent: Audience Member)*

The research indicates that ‘Back to Ours’ helped to generate a sense of inclusion, with audience members reporting feeling valued due to events taking place in their own neighbourhoods.

*“I think people feel valued more, because I think there's not a lot going on here. I think, if they can see these events going on, they'll think that someone's looking after them. I think people around here, don't feel like they're remembered; I think they feel they're forgotten.”*

*“I mean some people from Bransholme – understandably, never go into town – and why would they? They have no reason to go into the city centre. So they felt out of it, so it’s good if people are feeling included.”*

*“[Back to Ours] Made me feel more part of community as well.”*

*(Focus Group Respondent: Audience Members)*

*“It’s good because we don't normally get things up this area.” (Chat with Gran: Audience Member)*

* 1. Media Coverage & Analysis

Cornershop (one of Hull 2017’s PR agencies), utilised TrendKite to undertake an analysis of media coverage and analysis for ‘Back to Ours’.

As the target audience for ‘Back To Ours’ was people in specific communities in Hull, the focus was on local media including Yorkshire Post, Hull Daily Mail, BBC Look North, ITV Calendar and BBC Radio Humberside.

Some of the more parochial media such as Viking FM, KCFM, Estuary TV, West Hull FM and Kingston Radio aren’t tracked by cuttings agencies so aren’t represented in the figures.

The festival was also highlighted as a good example of community engagement in some key arts media such as the Stage and Arts Industry.

Some of the individual acts also featured in specialist media, for example there was a preview of *Yvette* in Britain’s national weekly black newspaper ‘The Voice’ and an interview with the star of *Joan* in monthly LGBT glossy ‘Diva Magazine’.

* + 1. Coverage Volume

‘Back To Ours’ secured over 312 pieces of coverage across print, online and broadcast, which equated to a total readership of over 354 million and estimated AVE (Advertising Value Equivalent) of more than £472,000.

**Print Highlights**

There were 35 newspaper pieces in print.

Highlights include:

* In a triple-page spread in The Observer which profiled three generations of Hull 2017 volunteers, one of the volunteers cited ‘Back To Ours’ as one of the big successes of the year;
* A triple-page spread on ‘Back To Ours’ in Yorkshire Post, in which the lead singer of The Pigeon Detectives Matt Bowman said: “I’ve got a lot of time for Hull … This next 12 months has the potential to do great things for the place and so to be part of that is a really nice position for us to be in.”;
* A double-page feature in Hull Daily Mail in which Drip writer Tom Wells said: “Everyone in Hull should get the chance to see or take part in something special this year. Hopefully the ‘Back To Ours’ festivals make that a bit easier. I’ve really loved the programme so far - my favourite bit was watching a very smiley pensioner dancing with a drag king in North Point Shopping Centre - and I’m properly proud that our show is part of it too.”;
* A first person piece in Hull Daily Mail by Louise Smith, North Point Shopping Centre manager, in which she says: “As well as introducing culture to a new audience, ‘Back To Ours’ has also boosted our capability and confidence as venues.”;
* An interview with Shaun Ryder in Browse magazine in which he describes playing a shopping centre on a council estate as “f\*\*\*ing brilliant” and says “Hull has always been great”.

Broadcast Highlights

There were more than 35 mentions across TV and radio.

* + 1. Online Highlights

There were more than 264 mentions across online news pieces.

Highlights include:

* In her ‘What to see’ blog for The Guardian, theatre critic Lyn Gardners said: “Back to Ours brings some fantastic shows, including Mark Thomas’s The Red Shed and Hijinx Theatre’s Meet Fred, to local neighbourhoods in Hull as part of Hull City of Culture.”;
* In a ‘Love Theatre Day’ feature, The Stage praised ‘Back to Ours’ for bringing a mix of audiences to a wide variety of unexpected venues;
* A blog by Martin Green on Arts Industry talks about ‘Back To Ours’ as a community engagement tool, describing how taking top-notch productions into the heart of neighbourhoods ensures nobody in Hull misses out on City of Culture; and
* An Arts Industry feature highlighted ‘Back To Ours’ alongside Creative Communities and No Limits as an example of Hull 2017’s strategy to involve local people.
  + 1. Website Traffic Generated

The www.hull2017.co.uk website received more than 1,709 click-throughs from online editorial.

Coverage about ‘Back to Ours’ has been shared over 21,000 times on social media, mostly Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

A Guardian article by Rachel Cooke titled Hull’s Year of Culture: ‘We look at our city with new eyes’ which referenced ‘Back to Ours’ was the most shared article with over 6,850 shares.

* 1. Social Media Analysis

Social media coverage of ‘Back to Ours’ has been analysed, utilising Falcon Social. The period looked at ran from 31 August 2017 to 3 March 2018, using the search terms:

* **<#backtoours**
* City of Culture; and
* Back to Ours>.

Sources searched by the system are Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Blog & Comments, YouTube, News, Wikis, Google + and Forums.

* + 1. Coverage Volume

Looking at the period of 31 August 2017 – 5 March 2018, which includes two of the four ‘Back to Ours’ festivals and the two weeks following the February 2018 festival, there were a total of 1213 mentions, representing an average of 14 mentions per day and 1 mentions per hour.

Mentions by topic show that ‘Back to Ours’ was by far the most frequent topic mentioned (718), most closely followed by #backtoours.

Over the time period analysed, the peaks in mentions coincided with the fourth day of the third festival, 9 January 2018 (line-up announcement for fourth festival), and 17 February 2018 (penultimate day of the fourth festival).

Social media channels were by far the most active generators of mentions, with Blogs & Comments, News, Wikis and Forums generating very few mentions with these search phrases.

* + 1. Sentiment

Analysis of the mentions made suggests that there were more positive than neutral mentions. The main peaks in positive mentions were on 18 September, 5 November, 20 November 2017, 10 January 2018 and 17 February 2018. On 18 September 2017 and 17 February 2018 positive mentions peaked above neutral mentions, whilst on 3 November 2017 and 9 January 2018 neutral comments significantly outperformed positive mentions.

Comparatively, negative mentions were minimal with only 14 being negative at their peak on 3 February 2018.

* + 1. Reach

81% of mentions took place in the UK, with 11% in the USA and 1% in Australia.

* 1. SWOT Analysis – Place Making

In order to summarise the key learnings from the above evaluation of Place Making outcomes, the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been identified and placed within a SWOT Analysis (see Table X.

Table X: SWOT Analysis – Place Making

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| --- | --- |
| STRENGTHS OF BACK TO OURS | WEAKNESSES OF BACK TO OURS |
| Working on the project impacted on positive perceptions towards the city, caused by CPT having more experience in communities outside of the city centre.  Successfully instilling pride in local community.  Audience members feel more connected with and proud of their local communities and Hull overall, particularly in areas which once felt ‘forgotten’.  Local people in the ‘Back to Ours’ neighbourhoods feel valued and included in the wider UK City of Culture celebrations.  Good level of media coverage across print, online and broadcast, including national news.  Local people had the opportunity to explore buildings in their neighbourhoods that they had never had chance to visit before.  The CPT have learnt more about Hull as a result of working on the project, including knowledge about the infrastructure of the city and geographical barriers to engagement with arts and culture.  Audiences have realised that there is more to Hull than they expected through attending ‘Back to Ours’. |  |
| OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY BACK TO OURS | THREATS IDENTIFIED BY BACK TO OURS |
| Venues seen in a new light by local audiences and negative preconceptions appear to be lifted.  High levels of support for City of Culture in general, reflecting a clear appetite for arts and culture events.  Media mentions by high profile artists such as Shaun Ryder could help to boost reputation and credibility of ‘Back to Ours’ further afield. |  |