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University of Hull reveals UK City of Culture 2017 evaluation

A preliminary evaluation of Hull's UK City of Culture year, released today by the University of Hull, has demonstrated the social impact the arts can have on a population and has examined how the city has utilised the culture title as a catalyst for creative place making and culture-led regeneration.

Hull City Council led the bid for UK City of Culture status as part of a long term plan to regenerate the city with hosting UK City of Culture as a key milestone and catalyst towards achieving Hull's ambition of becoming a world-class visitor destination. Key aims of the project included raising aspiration and skills through increased participation; growing the size and strength of the cultural and visitor economy; and transforming attitudes and perceptions of Hull.

UK City of Culture status brought Hull into the national spotlight, with major investment in a world-class cultural programme and cultural and visitor infrastructure; increased visitor numbers; unprecedented media coverage; and a significant increase in participation amongst the resident population in a city that had previously had low participation in arts and culture.

- Hull's UK City of Culture year attracted a total **audience of 5.3 million** attending over **2,800 events**, cultural activities, installations and exhibitions.
- Over half of the audiences were from Hull with nearly all residents (**over 95%**) attending at least one cultural activity during the year. The evaluation evidenced a new confidence in local people, with significant increases (+9%) in residents' willingness to take part in a range of cultural and non-cultural activities, including volunteering and sport.
- The total number of annual visitors in 2017 is projected to be **1.3m greater** than in 2013, when Hull bid for the UK City of Culture title and 4.7 million people visited the city¹. The projected value of tourism in 2017 is on track to contribute in excess of **£300m** to the economy.
- **3 in 4 residents are proud to live in Hull** and the city achieved significant national profile, securing over **20,200 pieces** of media exposure across print, online and broadcast media outlets.
- Nearly **800 new jobs** have been created in the visitor economy and cultural sector since 2013, a direct result of **investments totalling £219.5m in the cultural and visitor economy**, which are fully or partly attributable to Hull being awarded UK City of Culture status in November 2013.

¹ Official visitor numbers for 2017 will be released in the autumn.

The evaluation of Hull UK City of Culture 2017 is being led by the University of Hull's Culture, Place and Policy Institute (CPPI), as part of the University's Principal Partnership with Hull 2017. The preliminary outcomes are released as the University hosts a major conference – *Cultural Transformations: The Impacts of Hull UK City of Culture 2017* – exploring the results, successes and lessons from Hull's year in the cultural spotlight.

A preliminary evaluation report on the outcomes of Hull's UK City of Culture year will be presented and explored during the conference. The report examines the impact of the year across five key areas: arts and culture; place-making; economy; society and wellbeing; and partnerships and development.

These preliminary findings are released just months after the end of Hull's UK City of Culture year to inform ongoing work to capitalise on the initial achievements of the year and contribute to the ongoing delivery of Hull's 10-year Cultural Strategy.

Key outcomes discovered so far include:

❖ **Arts and Culture**

The Hull UK City of Culture project delivered a broad and high-quality programme that attracted a large audience

- Over 2,800 events, cultural activities, installations and exhibitions took place in 2017, attracting a total audience of **5.3 million**.
- The evaluation evidenced a new confidence in local people, with significant increases (+9%) in residents' willingness to take part in a range of cultural and non-cultural activities, including volunteering and sport.
- The **quality** of the cultural programme was identified as an important factor in achieving such high levels of engagement (audiences rated programme quality as very high, scoring major commissions with average ratings of between **8.5 to 9.5 out of 10** across all nine of Arts Council England's quality metrics).
- **465** new commissions were created, against an initial ambition of 60.
- Many audiences were new to Hull's cultural offer, with over **60%** of ticket-buying audiences being first time bookers. Record audience figures, exceeding **1.4 million**, were seen by the city's galleries and museums and major theatres, halls and performance venues across Hull experienced an increase in ticket sales of more than **30%**.
- There was a strong sense of ownership among local residents: nearly all residents attended at least one cultural activity in 2017 (**over 95%**) and over half of the audiences attending cultural events in 2017 were from Hull.
- **27.5%** of audiences were from East Yorkshire and there was an increase in the proportion of audiences from elsewhere in the UK, in comparison to 2016 events, with over **1 in 5** audience members (20.7%) visiting from elsewhere in the UK.
- The age profile of audiences shows high representation of people aged 55-64, and an under-representation of audiences aged 16-34 years old.
- **9 in 10** cultural organisations said support received in 2017 enabled them to try something new which they would have not had the opportunity to do otherwise.
- The vast majority of cultural organisations (**87%**) felt optimistic about the future development of the capacity and capabilities of the local cultural sector.

❖ Place Making

An increase in residents' pride and media profile was achieved for the city

- **75%** of residents are proud to live in Hull.
- Over **20,200** pieces of coverage secured across print, online and broadcast media. To have purchased this media exposure as advertising would have cost an estimated **£450m**.
- Over **3,000** business staff and volunteers were trained through Visit Hull and East Yorkshire's Big Welcome programme, resulting in an overwhelmingly positive experience for visitors. Audiences reported high satisfaction with visitor welcome rating it **4.6 out of 5**.
- Of those who visited Hull in 2017, **61%** stated they were likely or very likely to return in the future.
- **75%** of those who visited Hull in 2017 stated that it changed their perception of the city for the better.
- 8 in 10 (82.6%) stated the cultural programme provided them with a different experience of Hull and almost half stated that it showed them that there was more to the city than they had expected.
- **1 in 2** commissions were inspired by Hull's history or heritage. Over 3 in 4 residents (77.5%) felt their knowledge of Hull's history and heritage had increased as a result and **70%** of audiences said Hull 2017 made them think about Hull's contribution to the world.

❖ Economy

Hull's UK City of Culture year created new jobs and boosted the economy, with positive impacts on local businesses and enhanced investment to the city

- The total number of annual visitors in 2017 is projected to be 1.3m greater than in 2013, when Hull bid for the UK City of Culture title and 4.7 million people visited the city. The projected value of tourism in 2017 is on track to contribute in excess of £300m to the economy.
- Almost **800** new jobs have been created in the visitor economy and cultural sector since 2013.
- **1 in 4** businesses surveyed in Hull and East Riding took on new staff in 2017 and **1 in 5** businesses extended their opening hours. Over half of businesses surveyed felt that 2017 had contributed to increased turnover.
- **64%** of businesses who reported making an investment during the year said that it was of a higher value as a result of UK City of Culture and **72%** made this investment sooner than planned.
- Funding for local cultural activity grew in the build up to 2017, with successful applications to Arts Council England's Grants for the Arts programme, increasing by 346%. The year also saw the announcement of a 21% increase per year of regular funding to Hull's major cultural institutions through ACE's National Portfolio funding programme, an additional investment of £3.5m.

❖ Society and wellbeing

Confidence to participate in cultural, community and recreational activities has significantly increased across the city and participants reported positive effects on their wellbeing including improvements to self-esteem, confidence and happiness levels.

- Significant increases (+9%) in residents' willingness to take part in a range of cultural and non-cultural activities, including volunteering and sport.
- **8 out of 10** participants stated that being part of a project made them feel happier.
- **18%** of residents said that Hull 2017 inspired them to attend a course or study something they saw during the year.
- Over 100 education institutions took part in Hull UK City of Culture 2017's learning and participation programme, 'No Limits,' reaching **56,000** children and young people. As a result of taking part:
 - **40%** felt happier;
 - **34%** reported an increase in self-esteem;
 - **63%** were encouraged to take part in more creative activities in the future.
- Over **2,400 volunteers** undertook **337,000 hours of volunteering**. This is equivalent to **38.5 years**.
- Amongst the Hull 2017 volunteers, **71%** agreed or strongly agreed that there had been an improvement in their self-esteem, and **68%** that there had been an improvement in their confidence, directly linked to their participation in the year.

❖ Partnerships and development

Funding secured to deliver the year was more than double the original target

- **£32.8m** was raised for the cultural programme, more than double the original fundraising target, from more than 80 local and national funding partners.
- The success of the year was only possible as a result of a series of strategic partnerships, ranging from Hull City Council as host city partner to other public sector agencies, to national arts institutions, the media, health providers and Government.
- **9 in 10** respondents from the city's cultural sector reported having gained new or enhanced skills as a result of the year, but some felt there could have been more opportunities for knowledge sharing with national and international artists working in the city on new projects.
- The year provided an opportunity to develop international partnerships, by building on existing relationships with Freetown in Sierra Leone, Rotterdam and Reykjavik; whilst establishing a new partnership with Aarhus, European Capital of Culture 2017.
- Hull's UK City of Culture year also accelerated or attracted new funding for major capital projects in the city, with more than **£48m** invested by Hull City Council in public realm enhancement and major developments of the Ferens Art Gallery and Hull New Theatre.
- More than 25 cities, towns and villages visited Hull throughout 2017; meeting with teams from Hull 2017 and Hull City Council to share knowledge and learn from the city's experience.

The University of Hull is the exclusive academic partner of Hull 2017 and as a principal partner played a significant role in producing and hosting some of the spectacular events that formed part of the Hull 2017 programme.

Professor Glenn Burgess, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Hull and Hull 2017 Board Member, said: "Hull's UK City of Culture year delivered a high-quality programme and a strong visitor welcome which has left audiences with an overwhelmingly positive impression of the city. The city has capitalised well on the boost being City of Culture has provided, delivering positive social impacts and building its cultural infrastructure significantly right across the city. 2017 is the foundation for what comes next for Hull. The onus is now on Hull to build upon the success of the year and continue to develop a vibrant cultural city – I have every confidence that it will do so."

Professor Franco Bianchini, Director of the University of Hull's Culture, Place and Policy Institute, said: "The evaluation of Hull's UK City of Culture year is one of the first major pieces of work for the institute which researches the impacts of cultural activities across a range of areas including the economy, the sustainability of the arts sector, health and wellbeing. Our hope is that our evaluation of Hull's City of Culture will help inform the design and implementation of the post-2017 legacy strategy and help make Hull a blueprint for cities considering cultural investment as a tool for urban development."

Katy Fuller, who was recently appointed Creative Director at Culture Company, which as Hull 2017 was set up to deliver a world-class, 365-day cultural programme for the city's transformative year, said: "This early evaluation shows that Hull being UK City of Culture touched the lives of almost everyone living here. It increased the already fierce pride in their city and changed perceptions here and across the country.

"That it has had an impact on the bottom line is fantastic, but most important is how it has empowered people, as audiences, participants and artists. It offered unparalleled opportunities for artists to take risks, try new things and flex their creativity due to the huge number of new commissions. I believe this has had a direct impact on the levels of audience engagement, resulting, as it does, in work which is relevant, resonant and truly reflects the context.

"The vision of Hull City Council and support from the many funding and creative partners cannot be overstated and this continued working together will be critical to the future success of this great city, economically and as a centre for culture and creativity. We are passionately committed to playing our part in this vision for the future."

Hull City Council Leader, Councillor Stephen Brady said: "

"The evaluation demonstrates that our investment in City of Culture and in culture-led regeneration has paid off. It is incredibly encouraging to see that 800 jobs have already been created in the cultural and visitor sector as a direct result of the unprecedented public and private sector investment in Hull's cultural and visitor offer.

"The impact our City of Culture journey has had on local people has been just as remarkable. Levels of participation and pride within the city have exceeded all of our expectations, with the opportunities for local people to get involved enriching and improving people's lives in ways we could not have imagined when we decided to bid.

"The project has also resulted in soaring confidence in Hull from outside the city, and we know that there is more investment to come

“Our legacy plans have been in place since 2013 and we are already on our way to fulfilling them with the 3,500 seat music and conference centre Hull Venue due to open this summer, detailed plans for Yorkshire’s Cruise Terminal in development, a £27million project to create a new visitor attraction around the city’s Maritime History, and the continuation of our existing strong programme from our existing cultural institutions, as well as more major art commissions from the newly formed Culture Company, who will ensure Hull stays on the international culture map.

“I would like to thank Hull University’s Culture, Place and Policy Institute for this incredibly in-depth and thorough piece of work that will help us to further understand the impact of our year in the spotlight and help to shape our bright future.”

The preliminary outcomes evaluation includes data gathered from sources including an annual resident survey, UK-wide perception research, a survey of businesses across Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire, field research with attendees of the main programme events and in-depth consultations with cultural stakeholders.

For further information, visit www.hull.ac.uk/cppi.

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For further information or to request interviews, please contact Matt Walton, University of Hull Press Office (m.walton2@hull.ac.uk or 01482 462193) or Nic Oldfield (n.oldfield@hull.ac.uk or 01482 462193)

Notes to editors

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