



# Doncaster Council

Report

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**Agenda Item No. 12**

**To the Chair and Members of the  
Health and Wellbeing Board**

**Date:** 11 November 2021

## **HISTORY, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS: WELLBEING AT HERITAGE DONCASTER UPDATE**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In April 2018 Heritage Doncaster became an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The NPO funding enables Heritage Doncaster to deliver a strategic programme of outreach work called History, Health and Happiness.

History, Health and Happiness aims to tackle isolation and improve wellbeing in four key areas of Doncaster by using museum collections as the basis for outreach and community engagement activities. We strive to empower participants to feel more connected to others in their community, and have a greater understanding of and pride in the place they live. The activities are participant led and respond to the needs and interests of the communities in which they take place. The activities all take place outside of the museum buildings in localities.

All activities are evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University/Arc Research and Consultancy Ltd and we are confident that the work is making a real and meaningful difference to the lives of individuals across Doncaster.

The current funding for this programme of work comes to a close in March 2023. Heritage Doncaster are exploring funding opportunities for March 2023 onwards.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board are invited to feedback and challenge the work to date.

Heritage Doncaster is also exploring future funding models for this programme of work. We invite the Board to consider what role History, Health and Happiness could play in the health and wellbeing of Doncaster's community in the future, in order to inform future applications, and we also wish to explore what models of commissioning may look like in the future.

We also invite the Board to consider how as individual organisations you may contribute to the work of History, Health and Happiness at Heritage Doncaster in its current programme of work (until March 2023). Particular areas to develop include:

- Work with children and young people
- Activities in Stainforth, Adwick/Woodlands and Hexthorpe

- Adult mental health
- Commissions and alternative funding structures
- Ways to enhance co-production in the programming, including with health professionals

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

History, Health and Happiness works in localities around the borough to tackle isolation, improve wellbeing and encourage connections. The programme of work provides cultural interventions on the doorsteps of residents in Doncaster. The interventions are often part of recovery from mental health challenges for participants, as well as the maintenance of good wellbeing. Participants are also learning new skills, gaining confidence and deepening connections with their neighbours.

The work is evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University and Arc Research and Consultancy Ltd. Heritage Doncaster is confident that the programming is forming connections, enhancing skills and improving the wellbeing of participants.

Evaluation for 2020/21 found that lockdown sessions “reached out to the vulnerable and built online communities.” The evaluation concludes that “for those who attend the [digital social clubs] the impact of the project has been considerable, both in terms of connection, mental health, and increased confidence around computer use.” It also found that participants had a 20% increase in interest in new things - a contributing factor to increased mental health scores.

A full analysis of the impact to date can be found in Impact Reports:

Appendix 1: Impact Report 2019/20:

<https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk/projects/happyhistory/history-health-and-happiness-impact-report-2019-20/>

Appendix 2: Impact Report 2020/21:

<https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk/projects/happyhistory/history-health-and-happiness-impact-report-2020-21/>

## BACKGROUND

Activity began in localities in 2019, and included the launch of several partnership programmes and social clubs. These include:

- **Herstory.** A weekly social club for working aged women in Denaby Main. Each week the stories of women in the past are explored through hands-on activities. Aim to improve confidence, build resilience and skills.
- **History Club,** in partnership with B:friend. Monthly hands-on history activities at social clubs. Aim to invite conversation, build relationships and a sense of place.
- **Alzheimer’s Society sessions.** Aim to build relationships, stir memories and provide positive interactions.
- **Young Carers sessions.** Activities based on local history to inspire creativity, build skills and build sense of place.
- **ESOL classes,** in collaboration with AFCL. English language sessions utilising local history as their basis. Building skills and sense of place.

In 2020 activity was adapted in response to the pandemic. This included:

- **Digital Social Clubs.** Online clubs encouraging conversation and tackling loneliness. Continued attendance in the “new normal”.
- **Partnership programmes.** Including sessions commissioned by Doncaster Mind and in collaboration with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.

- **Contributions to partner activities**, including online broadcasts ran by b:friend, phone in social clubs, Youth Club activities
- **Offline activity packs.** Over 6000 activity packs sent to over 750 isolated adults each month.

Since August 2021 a blended approach to activities in being taken. Digital social clubs and offline activity packs continue, alongside resuming in-person activities and partnership programming.

Partnerships are at the heart of what we do. We have fostered partnerships with other Council teams, third sector organisations, community groups and individuals.

History, Health and Happiness is regarded in the heritage sector as an example of best practice. In 2020/21 the programme has been nominated for three national awards (including the upcoming Museums Change Lives Awards). The Programme Manager is regularly invited

### OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The presentation invites the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider what role History, Health and Happiness could play in the health and wellbeing of Doncaster's community in the future, in order to inform future applications, and we also wish to explore what models of commissioning may look like in the future.

### IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

|  | <b>Outcomes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Implications</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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|  | <p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>                                                              | <p>History, Health and Happiness sessions seek to build skills, and increase confidence of participants, equipping them with skills for work. Volunteer opportunities are also offered.</p> <p>History, Health and Happiness also works with local artists and other creative industries, providing work opportunities for local creatives. The History, Health and Happiness programme is recognised as an example of best practice and brings investment.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> </ul> | <p>History, Health and Happiness capitalises on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage. It strives to build a strong sense of place amongst participants, fostering civic pride.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|  | <p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>                                                                                                                         | <p>History, Health and Happiness is an example of life-long learning, providing ongoing learning opportunities for adults.</p> <p>The programme also delivers informal learning for children and young people, outside of a school setting.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>History, Health and Happiness has wellbeing at its core. It aims to tackle isolation, build relationships and improve wellbeing across the Borough. It strives to build resilience amongst participants, and enable people to live well.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul> | <p>History, Health and Happiness is driven by community insight and is co-produced by residents.</p>                                                                                                                                            |

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The programme is funded by Arts Council England. By December 2021 Heritage Doncaster will be notified whether funding is secured until 31 March 2023. Additional funding will need to be secured to continue with the work. This funding may include repeat funding from Arts Council England, but other sources must be

considered. This includes commissions and project based grants.  
Heritage Doncaster is undergoing a service transformation and staffing review.  
This may have some implications on the History, Health and Happiness staff team.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A at this stage

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A at this stage

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

N/A at this stage

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

N/A at this stage

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

N/A at this stage

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

N/A at this stage

## **CONSULTATION**

N/A at this stage

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Impact Report 2019/20:  
<https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk/projects/happyhistory/history-health-and-happiness-impact-report-2019-20/>
- Impact Report 2020/21:  
<https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk/projects/happyhistory/history-health-and-happiness-impact-report-2020-21/>

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