

This first HACO report - produced by GHP's external evaluators Hall Aitken - establishes some of the central issues that will be expanded and developed upon in future reports. The central purpose of the report is to establish a baseline that can act as a foundation for the future research and analysis scheduled to be undertaken in subsequent HACO reports. The report is broken into three parts. The first part briefly outlines current GHP project work. The second examines stakeholder attitudes to the GHP and the arts in general. The final part details Local Area Agreement statistics that will be used to assess the GHP's contribution to local development issues.

Stakeholder survey

The survey details perceptions of the arts, Arts Development Officers and the Green Heart Partnership amongst public and private sector stakeholders. The survey makes a direction comparison between the results gathered in the summer 2007 and the results gathered in winter 2008. The findings were:

- There has been an increase in the numbers of stakeholders who view the arts as being important.
- There has been a decrease in stakeholder awareness of the GHP and ADOs although this could be attributed to the maturation of GHP projects and staff attrition levels in the public sector.

These results offer a useful baseline and context for future HACO reports. Another survey will be conducted in the summer/autumn of 2008 and will be combined with stakeholder interviews. Forthcoming HACO reports will seek to answer some of the questions established by this baseline report.

LAA Indicators

20 LAA indicators have been selected to assess the impact of the GHP on local areas. For the locations where GHP projects have taken place, data is available from national data sets for 6 of the 20 indicators. The other 14 will be gathered from future data gathering exercises such as residents' e-surveys and stakeholder interviews. At present it is difficult to assess how these indicators relate to GHP activity and as such they should be viewed as a baseline only.

1. GHP Project updates

The GHP has been working on a number of projects since March 2008. Of these projects, Stevenage Town Centre Gardens, Watford Bushey Arches and Oxhey Library are in progress while Building Futures and Hertsmere's Community Spaces and Elstree and Borehamwood Station projects are currently in development. These projects have the potential to raise the awareness of the partnership amongst regional stakeholders.

Stevenage Town Centre Gardens - Stevenage Borough Council

The final Stage 1 works have now been completed. The GHP and HTA Landscape Design have submitted their Stage 2 tender for the detailed masterplanning stage of the project and the outcome of this is expected shortly. Working with an artist to



engage the community throughout this new stage and in the development of Audience and Volunteer Plans, the GHP will also appoint another artist to provide creative support to the design team with a particular focus on New Town design heritage.

Bushey Arches – Watford Borough Council

GHP is currently working with Clipston Construction Control and the rest of the construction team to deliver the project. Network Rail has agreed to the proposed plans in principle and Herts Highways improvements around the site are currently underway. Subject to planning permission, this will be followed by hard and soft landscaping on the roundabout and sculptural lighting under the archway to be completed by the end of 2008.

Oxhey Library – Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

GHP appointed artists have completed their community engagement exercises that examined the future services that could be delivered from the library. The outcome of this engagement has already been used by the HCC to support the continued development of the library's community engagement plan, recently submitted to the Big Lottery. This work has culminated in the publication of a book – due to be realised in July – that presents all the material in an accessible way and will be distributed to the local community and available to loan from the library.

Hertsmere Community Spaces/ Elstree and Borehamwood Station

The GHP is currently engaged with Hertsmere officers to develop two projects for the Borough, following a creative away day. The first project supports the implementation of the Hertsmere Play Strategy through the design and construction of community spaces. The second project is developing a proposal for enhancing the Elstree and Borehamwood Station to improve the awareness of the local film heritage associated with Elstree studios.

Building Futures

GHP is working with HCC to develop and market the Building Futures website. The aim is to transform the site into a dynamic and geographically specific urban toolkit that can encourage usage and ownership within the County, as well as supporting the development and management of County-wide targets. The GHP is currently in the process of responding to the County's brief, while also discussing new partnership opportunities with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust about the forthcoming module of the Buildings Futures Guide which focuses on Landscape and Biodiversity.

GHP website/ Knowledge Bank

The GHP website now features the 'Knowledge Bank' functionality. This data repository contains a wealth of information that the GHP has collected from its projects and assignments and is designed to inform and empower project partners with the knowledge that the GHP successfully employs in the development process. Regular e-bulletins will keep members informed about additions to the knowledge bank.



2. Perceptions of the GHP amongst regional stakeholders

An e-survey has been in operation since 2006 that assesses the impact of the GHP amongst stakeholders in the localities in which the partnership operates. The e-survey is usually run at 6 month intervals and involves a variety of public and private sector stakeholders who work in the regeneration, economic development and arts/cultural fields.

This analysis compares the results of surveys conducted in the summer of 2007 (part 2 survey) and the winter of 2008 (part 3 survey). The analysis focuses on a number of key areas.

The importance of art to stakeholders and local authorities

Stakeholders were asked about the importance of arts in general. Survey respondents were asked to rate their opinion on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is very unimportant, 5 is neutral and 10 is very important. The key findings were:

- There has been a large increase in the percentage of stakeholders who view the arts as being very important – an increase of 8% on the number 10 scale between summer 2007 and winter 2008.
- There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of stakeholders who have neutral attitudes to the arts or who view the arts as being unimportant.
- There has been an increase of 6% in the importance of the arts to local authorities on the very important (10) scale.
- Evidence from stakeholders reveals that as more time and resources are devoted to arts related projects, the more people are likely to state that arts are very important. However, while this attitude has not permeated all levels of the public sector, it is certainly moving in a more positive direction.

Awareness of the GHP amongst stakeholders

- There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of stakeholders who are aware of the GHP. This could be due to:
 - The fact that GHP projects have been operational for a number of years and with plans, consultations and events completed some of the initial drive and publicity may have been lost as projects reach increasing levels of maturity.
 - Between the summer 2007 and the winter 2008 surveys, the database was updated based on a new contact list supplied by Gunpowder Park. This new contact list – combined with the existing list - revealed that many stakeholders had changed jobs or had moved into other position.
 - The new GHP projects will re-energise the GHP process and this should increase the awareness of the partnership amongst stakeholders as the projects develop.

Awareness of the work of Arts Development Officers (ADOs)

- There has been a percentage decrease in awareness of ADOs amongst the stakeholders contacted.



- There is a possibility that with the maturation of GHP projects, the link between ADOs and other departments fostered by the GHP approach has gradually been eroded. This could also be due to the fact that many ADO posts are unfilled, have new staff employed or have been closed down altogether.

The sustainability of the GHP approach

- As with previous responses, the percentage of stakeholders who regard the GHP method as being sustainable has decreased since the part 2 survey of summer 2007.
- However, the overwhelming majority of stakeholders still assert that the GHP method is sustainable.
- The percentage of responses that state that the approach is not sustainable has remained static and in one case (in the 'not at all' category) has actually decreased.

Future research questions

The winter 2008 survey results raise some interesting research questions that must be understood in future HACO reports. These are:

- What are the reasons behind an increasing number of stakeholders regarding the arts as being important? Why has this not been translated into a greater role for ADOs?
- Why has the awareness of the GHP decreased over the course of 6 months and how does this relate to previous questions surrounding an increased importance attached to the arts in general?
- To what extent will the new GHP projects increase awareness of the partnership amongst regional stakeholders?
- How do ADOs currently work in their local public agencies? What is the relationship between them and the GHP projects operating in their areas?
- Is the increasing importance attached to the arts but the decreasing awareness of the GHP and ADOs a result of the approach being incorporated into local practices by other departments which have 'mainstreamed' the arts and bypassed the agents responsible for developing the approach in the first place?

3. Local Area Agreement Indicators

20 Local Area Agreement (LAA) indicators have been selected to monitor and evaluate the GHP between 2008 and 2010. These indicators have been selected because:

- They directly relate to the GHP approach, involving criteria such as volunteering and local people influencing local decisions.
- They are measurable, definable and can be used to monitor changes in local perceptions over a period of time.
- The indicators link into various national strategies related to civil participation, environmental improvements and local empowerment.



The purpose of these indicators is to establish how GHP projects have influenced local priority targets and establish a body of evidence that can be used as leverage for future projects. Of the 20 LAA indicators, data is currently available for 6 indicators. National statistics provided this data and future HACO reports will include the other indicators through a combination of local residents surveys, stakeholder interviews and local council/authority data. The indicators (averaged over the 11 areas where the GHP is active) are as follows:

- The percentage of people from different backgrounds who get on well together in their local area is 81%.
- The percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality is 29%.
- The secondary school persistent absence rate is 6%.
- The percentage of anti-social behaviour (residents who think that people being rowdy or drunk in public places is a big problem in their local area) is 32%.
- The percentage of residents who perceive that drug use is a problem in the local area is 32%.
- The percentage of residents who are very/fairly satisfied that their authority has kept the land clear of litter and refuse is 70%.

Future HACO reports will comment on a number of other LAA indicators. These indicators - and their associated categories – are listed below:

Priority indicators (these underpin central government policies and are part of the incentive-driven targets negotiated by central government with all Local Authorities)

- % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.
- Planning to adapt to climate change.
- Improved local biodiversity.

Project specific indicators (these relate to outcomes/outputs of projects that are operating in a specific Local Authority area)

- Participation in regular volunteering.
- 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment.

Secondary indicators (selected by Local Authorities but are not part of the incentive-driven priority indicators negotiated with central government)

- Children who have experienced bullying.
- People over 65 who say they have the information, support and control to live independently.
- Congestion – average journey time per mile during morning peak.
- Skills gap in the current workforce.
- Working age people with access to employment by public transport.
- Children travelling to school - mode of transport usually used.



LAA indicators – the next steps

In order to accurately secure all identified LAA indicators and understand the relative contribution of GHP projects to these figures, the following activities will be taking place:

- E-survey with local residents
- E-survey with local stakeholders
- Telephone interviews with a selection of stakeholders
- Secure access to local council/authority data

Correlating the data

The LAA data will be linked to the each GHP project specifically. For example, where a GHP project has involved the community in decision making or consultation, the LAA indicators will be able to measure the relative impact that these initiatives had. This will mean that different projects - using different techniques – will yield different LAA results. When these results are linked to interviews and surveys, it will be possible to directly link LAA indicators with their respective local GHP project. The results will also reveal which GHP methods are the most effective, while the interviews and surveys will reveal why.