

Arts, Culture, and Health Programme Review 2022/2023.

Birmingham City Council, Public Health Communities Team.

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Introduction

During the financial year of 2022/23, the public health communities team at Birmingham City Council commissioned an array of projects for the Arts, Culture and Health programme, notably a Jamaican 60th Anniversary Celebration Event which focused upon raising awareness in the following five focus areas of health: Pregnancy, Mental Health, Musculoskeletal Disease, Cardiovascular Disease, and Diabetes. Alongside this, a series of live cooking demonstrations and community festivals were held in part as a celebration of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth games and to celebrate the cultural and ethnic diversity within Birmingham, a model which was built upon and tailored towards the rise in the cost of living.

For the purpose of our Arts, Culture, and Health Programme evaluation for 2022/2023 we have utilised the evaluation model of Reach, Effectiveness, Adoptions, Implementation, and Maintenance or RE-AIM. Using the RE-AIM evaluation model, we can address questions such as what intervention components are effective, with which implementation strategies, for whom, in what settings, how and why, and for how long. Furthermore, the RE-AIM evaluation model is practical for replicating and adapting effective interventions that are feasible for local delivery and focused upon the impact on different dimensions and outcomes related to populational health and the context in which they are or are not effective. This report will provide an in-depth overview of our Arts, Culture, and Health programme during 2022/23 and will provide the reader with an understanding of the projects we commission and build upon the evidence base on the direct and indirect impact of arts, culture, and health activity. This form has been authored by Rhys Boyer.

Jamaican 60th Anniversary Celebration Events

Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes

This project aimed to deliver engaging workshops and cooking sessions that educate, celebrate, and inform local residents of Birmingham between the ages of 18- 65+ from the Caribbean, and specifically of Jamaican heritage about type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, whilst ensuring this is culturally appropriate

This project achieved its aims by conducting interactive, informative, and engaging workshops that were tailored around Jamaican heritage and culture, for local residents in a culturally appropriate manner. Some key successes of the project were:

- Impact on behaviour change through a practical cooking session with participants who were Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage which is an important aspect to identify and action to ensure project behaviour change was culturally appropriate.
- Connected with Birmingham residents and helped build long-lasting connections in the area, tied to something tangible and sustainable such as cooking a culturally appropriate meal which creates cohesion.

- Created and used artistic outputs such as videos and images that will be useful to engage more people within the project and reach more people than those who physically attended,
- The project was hosted and managed by Black female health professionals who were registered nutritionists and registered associate nutritionists. This is a key area to consider when engaging with the Black Caribbean and Jamaican Community and also for skills building, confidence and notoriety for Black Females within the professional environments

Reach

To ensure that engagement for this project was targeted to those who are Jamaican and/or of Jamaican heritage in Birmingham, targeted communications were made in a variety of ways from displaying event details in specific Facebook groups, some of which included; black-owned Birmingham, Black females in Birmingham and Birmingham events, these groups had a collective reach of over 20k followers. The details of the workshops were also sent to local organisations such as the Association of Jamaican Nationals and the Legacy centre. Engagement with Christian faith organisations was made, by contact via phone calls, emails, or WhatsApp messages with Churches. Furthermore, to ensure those that attended on the day were from the relevant community group, upon signing up on Eventbrite we required personal details to be inputted to ensure that those attending were Jamaican and/or of Jamaican heritage. This method of information communication and engagement, using a

variety of social and digital platforms allowed for a targeted approach to be made in a non-invasive manner.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of this project was targeted towards behaviour change and influence on health and wellbeing knowledge, in particular, the impact nutrition can have on cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Comments from participants reiterated this such as “Jamaican food is good, it’s just how you cook it”; “Learning to cook with different ingredients that are good for your body”; “Finding alternative ways of using spices and with less salt”; and “Thank you all so much for today, we found it very informative, enjoyable and a great way to get advice about healthy eating. It was great to meet you all and we look forward to attending other sessions”.

The workshops that were conducted focused on the method of showing, then doing. This interactive approach in which participants cooked a dish or created their own spice mix allowed for good interpersonal interactions between registered nutritionists to discuss aspects of cooking methods, and salt intake. Participants were also presented with the opportunity to take home information leaflets on Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, and create their own herbs and spices blend that could be shared with others within their peer-to-peer networks who could not attend, which encourages conversations and discussions around what they have learned.

Adoption

Local community-based organisations such as community interest companies, local charities, and faith centres were engaged prior to

the project commencing to support the dissemination of events, this was to ensure that there was targeted engagement and communication to the Black Caribbean community, specifically to those who are Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage. The project was well received by the community, as the theme of celebration of culture and its intersection with health themes was seen as an important need for the community group.

The engagement of key community groups, those with particular focus upon those from the Black Caribbean and Jamaican community from project initiation was important.....

Implementation

Core to this project were the two cooking workshops conducted with participants targeted towards Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes, and they were tailored to ensure that the needs of the community could be met during the sessions by developing trusting connections to ensure that information disseminated was both personally and culturally relevant.

Throughout the day, project partnerships and providers were asked to take part in an informal interview to capture their experiences, thoughts, and feelings on the session in which they partook, talking about their food, culture, memories, and food in their culture, encapsulated by highlighting what they have learned on the day. Images and videos captured on the day were built upon after the project with the hosting of an online virtual exhibition which was intended to be used to reach a wider audience with an artistic output

that was interactive whilst giving the user the same feeling of attending a gallery in person. This method proved successful as it removed some barriers to participation and facilitation such as cost and reach, whilst areas such as physical interaction were missing, effective interactions with videos and images allowed for virtual exhibition users to save time and flexibility as the online exhibition could be entered and left at any time or place convenient to the user.

Maintenance

Participation in this project enabled many participants to develop cultural competency in relation to food, by considering the variety in which you can prepare and cook foods as workshops showcased how to give food flavour in healthier ways. The use of one-to-one support in the creation of dishes and herb and spice blends is good practice that can be sustained beyond the event. This sustainable aspect can be utilised within peer-to-peer networks by using techniques such as information gathering, sharing, and engagement.

This aspect is built upon, as images and videos were captured on the day which will continue to be hosted on various webpages and social media sites, and the use of videos and case studies within engagement activities to showcase the positives of this project and the legacy in which it created and can continue to develop upon. Beyond the digital and virtual legacy, the relationships built were of the key importance of legacy to this project, as a bridge was formed in which community members and stakeholders across Birmingham to address the key health inequalities in relation to Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes within the Jamaican community in Birmingham to create and sustain action.



Pregnancy

The aim of this project was to conduct educational participatory skills-based workshops to engage, educate and empower Jamaican female participants around pregnancy. Workshops were attended by professional midwives, nutritionists, and an academic researcher, and digital engagement tools such as podcasts and digital recordings were used throughout to utilise emotive messages and provide health literacy skills on the array of health and wellbeing themes involved in pregnancy.

This project was conducted in partnership with a local social enterprise within the heart of Newtown in Birmingham, in which a large concentration of the local Jamaican community resides. A plethora of key achievements were achieved throughout this project such as:

- Educational workshops, which were culturally appropriate and focused upon key health inequalities that Black Caribbean and Jamaican females face. Workshops covered areas such as:
 - the science of being pregnant, utilising visuals to show the three trimesters that were delivered by a midwife who had cultural training and an understanding of the community
 - the different types of options to give birth – building knowledge on how to make informed and tailored choices
 - knowledge and understanding of epidural and inducing

- knowledge on the best types of food to eat pre and post-pregnancy and how to manage weight pre and post pregnancy
- knowledge on breastfeeding
- knowledge and awareness on birthing partners and post-birth depression
- sharing session on experiences within NHS Maternity services

Reach

Due to the topic area and sensitivity surrounding pregnancy, and the experiences of Black Caribbean women within healthcare settings when pregnant, targeted engagement was conducted with a local community interest company who have a database of over 150 families who they work with. Participants for this project were all women, from the black Jamaican community, with a mix having gone through pregnancy or planning to have children in the future. The sessions held were open to all, with posters and information shared via social media and through word-of-mouth amongst the community.

Effectiveness

Workshops held throughout the project were based around open and inclusive discussion on the everyday issues that are impacting Black Jamaican women. Throughout the workshops, health literacy, and jargon were common occurrences among participants with many reporting that terms such as heart health, sleep management,

obesity, and pregnancy-related glaucoma had no understanding of the terms or how they impacted their health.

During workshops, alternative terms were used by facilitators to discuss the terminology and where appropriate simplify terminology. This had a marked impact on participants, as an improvement was made in relation to confidence from baseline measure in the understanding of pregnancy terminology and how participants felt using appropriate words to describe their health and wellbeing. This was built upon with signposting to statutory organisations and relevant cultural community-based organisations and how to raise any concerns if they are not happy.

One of the key barriers to improving health and wellbeing for Black Jamaican women found during workshops was the complexity surrounding experiences within healthcare, areas such as representation, cultural sensitivity, patient rights, and feeling of not being heard were common occurrences and workshops created a safe and open space for discussions amongst facilitators and participants.

Adoption

This project involved many people and organisations from a variety of levels, but the core was culturally competent professionals with experience and knowledge in Pregnancy, in particular the experiences of Black Caribbean and Black Caribbean women. The adoption aspect of this project included building relationships with organisations such as the NHS Trust, maternity midwives, and a local Black Caribbean community interest company to have involvement

but also impact upon this project, to help shape and tailor the project to direct community needs, to address the gaps directly and this informed process by those on the frontline was key to help shape understanding and build upon the evidence base into the maternity experiences of Black Jamaican women and how they can be improved.

Legacy and sustainability were important factors of this project, as the partnerships built helped shape the narratives of service design for other organisations who noted they will conduct a pregnancy-related project in innovative ways such as the use of podcasts to share knowledge and resources, or to delivery place-based health project in collaboration with academics and training local Black Jamaican women to be pregnancy champions for others within their community. This snowball effect is important as building and furthering the evidence base can help explore the inequalities and direct experiences faced by Black Jamaican women and to advocate to change in maternity services.

Implementation

Sessions hosted throughout the project were targeted across themes that explored the intersectionality of experience during all phases of pregnancy and experiences throughout.

The before-pregnancy session covered areas such as what women want and need to know before getting pregnant, lifestyle advice in relation to food, nutrition, and exercise, mental health and wellness such as family and relationships and the differences between single and dual parenting; A session was held to share open stories on

motherhood from older people to understand personal experiences as oral history to tailor experiences and knowledge to culture and traditions; A session was held with midwives and nurses from the NHS to openly discuss experiences from both sides on working for the NHS and experiences within care from patients and for open discussions about experiences and advise based upon this; Final sessions were focused on the peri-natal phases of pregnancy such as what women want or need to know during pregnancy, lifestyle and behavioural advise, and advise on breastfeeding, birthing methods, and Dulas. Post-natal sessions followed a similar theme but focused on self, such as caring for yourself after pregnancy, self-identity, balancing career, and the challenges and successes of motherhood

Maintenance

This project has strengthened the health awareness of the participants in particular women from the Jamaican community as they were given the opportunity to share their lived experiences and learnings within a secure and safe environment and the discussions held will have a legacy both directly and indirectly with participants as they shared knowledge which can impact upon and the communities in which they are a part of to build a physical support network.



Mental Health

The aim of this project was to conduct educational participatory skills-based workshops to engage, educate and empower Jamaican participants around mental health. This project helped support participants to give an opportunity to share experiences and stories about Jamaican culture, and improve self-esteem and confidence.

This project was conducted within community-based settings such as a local church and botanical gardens where an array of workshops were conducted, some of which were specifically tailored towards mental health and other covering the intersectionality of poor mental health such as physical activity levels and diet and nutrition. Some of the key achievements of this project were:

- Delivery of food and mood workshops by a nutritional therapist, in which discussions about the link between food and mood were explored with options for participation to taste examples
- Dance and Jamaican drumming workshops were conducted with the aim of uplifting and engaging participants to improve both their mental and physical health through music and dance.
- Fitness and movement workshops were conducted by a local Black heritage organisation, to support both mental and physical health in an interactive and cohesive manner.
- Healthy drinks and healthy snacks workshops were aimed at developing knowledge of healthy food options such as turmeric and honey smoothie taster sessions.

- Calmness workshops in which Art activity such as rock painting was conducted to encourage the process of reflection, with a key cultural focus upon an individuals' journey from their homeland, and a workshop training personal journeys using life maps to help build and strengthen mental resilience. This was supplemented with a showing of a short film on individual journeys from homelands to the UK, in which participants had the opportunity to reminisce and openly discuss their individual journeys to aid in mental wellness.
- Vision boarding in which participants created a holistic vision for the future and were guided through a visualisation session.

Reach

This project helped create a support network for participants, who were encouraged within a safe environment to connect and share their experiences and stories that related to Jamaica, and its culture to improve connectedness to their community and its members and foster relationships which can combat loneliness and isolation and improve health and wellbeing. Activities were tailored towards better management and prevention of poor mental health. Engagement for this project was targeted towards local faith centre congregations with micro-engagements being conducted in a variety of ways such as face-to-face discussions about the project within faith centres or the use of social media groups to disseminate information.

Effectiveness

A variety of workshops and visits were conducted throughout this project such as reflection sessions which provided participants the opportunity to reminisce on memories relating to Jamaica and its culture and their personal experiences was is an important therapeutic activity, particularly for older adults. Discussions on the day opened up a variety of topics, with some participants sharing their skills in areas such as poetry, and musical instruments.

An important achievement of the workshops was the increased connectedness within the group via the sharing of memories and was captured on video where participants took videos in their own homes, talking about Jamaica and their community in Birmingham and what is important to them

Adoption

Workshops focused on a variety of areas such as the delivery of food and mood workshops by a nutritional therapist, in which discussions about the link between food and mood were explored with options for participants to taste examples. Jamaican drumming workshops were conducted with the aim of uplifting and engaging participants to improve both their mental and physical health through music and dance and Calmness workshops in which art activity such as rock painting was conducted to encourage the process of reflection, with a key cultural focus upon an individual's journey from their homeland and a workshop training personal journeys using life maps to help build and strengthen mental resilience. This was supplemented with a showing of a short film on individual journeys from homelands to

the UK, in which participants had the opportunity to reminisce and openly discuss their individual journeys to aid in mental wellness.

Implementation

As a result of the activity conducted such as the sharing activities and workshops an increase in mental health awareness specific to the Jamaican community as participants actively shared their learning with a wider group of friends and other family, discussions about the drumming sessions, trip to the Botanical gardens, poetry and writing about the Jamaica that was captured leaves a legacy for both direct and indirect participants and the communities in which they live. This helped to nurture social connections and community engagement through shared experiences via group discussions allowing individuals to share their successes, challenges, and stories. The overarching goal was increased health literacy to understand more about mental wellbeing and for the participants to share their cultural knowledge.

Maintenance

The inspiration was created as a result of this project, specifically towards older adults who are Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage in relation to mental health and interplays of areas such as friendship, relationships, physical activity, and their impact upon mental wellbeing and balance. This inspiration was inspired by utilising creative methods of engagement and drawing upon the spirit of community and cohesion.

Musculoskeletal Disease

The aim of this project was to connect with older people who were Jamaican or of Jamaican heritage from local communities in Birmingham who may be at risk of experiencing Musculoskeletal Disease conditions and to via the medium of drama and storytelling improve the health experiences and outcomes of participations when engaging with healthcare services.

This project had a wide impact and reach, and its key achievements were:

- Improved familiarity with non-clinical reporting such as booking systems, 111 service, and the communication of pain verbally and remotely using the telephone, which helps address musculoskeletal disease conditions through early intervention and pain management via earlier reporting and improved communication between individuals and healthcare professionals, counteracting historic biases.
- Facilitating improved health outcomes for older Jamaican people by bolstering their confidence and readiness to engage with contemporary healthcare services incl. digital healthcare whilst recognising the difficulties they may have encountered.
- Demonstrated appreciation for, and recognition of traditional storytelling and Jamaican folklore to strengthen community cohesion and craft appropriate public health.
- Increase in reported feelings amongst participants of interconnectedness, belonging and engagement between

elders and healthcare infrastructure on arthritis, osteoporosis, and other conditions.

Reach

Work was conducted to engage and develop meaningful links with the community, with a focus on those from the Black Jamaican community with a key focus on the celebration of the Jamaican 60th Anniversary of independence to add further significance and impact upon work. Engagement activities were conducted with local faith centres and their congregations, amongst key community leaders, and across service users of the provider to work toward recruiting local residents.

Effectiveness

This project focused upon delivering healthcare messaging and engagement around Musculoskeletal health within the early stages of medical intervention and the provision of appropriate healthcare to individuals from Black, Asian, and multi-ethnic communities. Participants were asked to report upon their sense of self-worth and awareness to undertake medical treatment at the beginning and end of the project, and a positive increase was reported relating to positive ideation and self-actualisation which was an important factor to provide holistic wellness to participants, whilst exploring and reporting upon the intersectionality of health beyond just musculoskeletal conditions towards there impact upon mental health.

As an alternative to traditional and formal surveys and interviews, a 'fill in the blanks' t-shirt exercise was undertaken before and after the project and provided a good evidence base and artistic output to report upon the successes of the project. Live roleplays were conducted based on the use of the 111 service and other care services to raise awareness and build the confidence of participants in using and experiencing these services.

Adoption

During workshops, participants were able to directly utilise verbal cues and conduct conversational techniques to increase their ability to communicate remotely with call handlers and healthcare professionals. This is an important aspect of the project, prejudice has towards the seldom-heard lived experiences of Black Caribbeans and Black Jamaicans within healthcare systems were noted during workshops from the initial reporting and diagnosis of conditions to perceptions of individuals' pain. As a result of the roleplay sessions, participants felt less reticent about engaging with official healthcare systems and felt they could describe their experiences to a call handler or GP over the phone in an improved manner and share this advice with others.

Implementation

The facilitation of activity specifically for older Jamaican adults helped bolster confidence and readiness to engage with contemporary healthcare services incl. digital healthcare whilst recognising the difficulties they may have encountered. Methods used to achieve this were recognising traditional storytelling and

Jamaican folklore to strengthen community cohesion and craft appropriate public health. Benefits of this were seen via an Increase in reported feelings amongst participants of interconnectedness, belonging and engagement between elders and healthcare infrastructure on arthritis, osteoporosis, and other conditions.

Maintenance

An important element of this project was tailored around building trust and fostering positive relationships amongst older adults from the Black Jamaican community by respecting their preferences and listening activity to them to facilitate feelings of confidence and readiness to engage with healthcare services, specific to Musculoskeletal conditions which often can be difficult to describe. Participants were better equipped with discussing their conditions and descriptive terminology when engaging with healthcare services, which can have a lasting impact upon their engagement and satisfaction with healthcare services.



Learnings for improvement

Overall, the project was deemed a success by us as commissioners, the providers, and the people who participated in the project. The inclusion of activity tied with Jamaican heritage and culture helped the Jamaican community to engage with health topics. However, there are still areas of the project which can be improved:

- The Public Health officer should work closely with the provider to find a validated questionnaire or data collection metric. This will allow for more quantitative findings to be collected which will strengthen the robustness of the evaluation.
- As outlined above, arts organisations may wish to receive Public Health evaluation training which will help them to collect better data and evidence the success of their intervention.
- The team should seek to work closer with Service Leads for each topic area from the start of the project to ensure that the intervention is linking to other Public Health work that is currently being completed.
- It may be worth exploring if the health conditions identified are the biggest concern for the target population. An initial consultation with the target population may make the project more relevant and useful to the intended participants.
- The Communities Team may wish to consider ways that the project can collect data beyond the lifespan of the project. This can help to see if the intended intervention has had a prolonged effect on the community. *It is however conceded that these projects are low spend and this would likely increase the spend of the project.*

Commonwealth Community Food and Culture Events

The aim of this project was to conduct ten commonwealth food and culture events across Birmingham, within local communities of Identity that were related to the Commonwealth and local places of cultural diversity. The events took place during and after the Commonwealth games to celebrate and continue the legacy of the games.

This project had an array of innovative engaging elements, some of the key highlights were:

- Ten community-based live cooking demonstrations were conducted, celebrating the cultural diversity of food and the culture from which the dish came from. Events were held across Birmingham.
- Two artworks were created at local parks which celebrated the cultural heritage of place.
- Ten raised beds were set up across the city to improve access to urban farming and to encourage citizens to grow their vegetables and herbs.
- A commonwealth digital recipe book was created, which encapsulated all the recipes cooked at community-based live cooking demonstrations

Reach

This project aimed to celebrate both the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games and our citizens by conducting a series of inspiring healthy cookery, music and art events across the city.

Ten community centred live cooking demonstrations were conducted with the aim of creating and engaging and informative experiences by cooking dishes from across the commonwealth member states to celebrate the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games with local residents within local places that were reflective of the community. The ten events were held across June and August in the following locations and events:

- NECHELSS Pod – Ghana
- Handsworth Simmer down festival – Trinidad and Tobago
- Birchfield Big Local – Nigeria
- Castle Vale Commonwealth live site – India
- Edgbaston Reservoir Commonwealth live site – Sri Lanka
- Glee Club Celebrating Jamaica Independence – Jamaica
- Handsworth Park Commonwealth live site – Kenya
- Ward End Park Commonwealth live site – England
- Aston Community Games and Georges Park Lozells – Bangladesh

Events were held across Birmingham with each event recruiting participants for the local area and where possible utilising summer cultural events to as a venue site to increase reach, in addition to dissemination via social media platforms and use of both digital and non-digital engagement.

At each site, there were an array of volunteers, a cooking specialist, and a musician to deliver each session. During the cooking demonstration, traditional cultural foods were cooked with engagement encouraged by the audience to discuss how certain dishes are cooked sharing cultural knowledge

Effectiveness

Throughout the events promoting culturally appropriate, healthy, and affordable recipes were achieved and an increase in the ease of cooking was improved by handing out food, spices, and recipe cards.

Ensuring that foods were of cultural significance was a key binding factor for this project to be effective, and it allowed for old and new experiences and knowledge to be shared relating to how a recipe is prepared, how it is shared, and relates to common experience. The celebration of culture by using food was important and an important aspect of the celebration of equality by being diverse and inclusive within Birmingham. The events were interactive, with facilitators sharing information relating to the Eatwell guide and tailoring it towards cultures, such as common food staple items from the Indian sub-Continent e.g. pulses, legumes, and steamed rice or the jerked lean meats, beans, and vegetables of Caribbean cuisine and the wholemeal grains and slow-cooked dishes of sub-Saharan Africa.

The events were targeted to be an immersive experience of knowledge sharing in the spirit of the Commonwealth, promoting the cultural food practices of countries, as well as other traditions

such as music. Some of the feedback provided by the participants was:

- “This event was authentic in representing the Ghanaian culture – Perfect”
- “Brilliant display stall, very engaging experience”
- “The diversity was amazing, bringing together all the cultures in Handsworth, well done to the organisation”
- “So thankful that you guys provided free food. The food was so amazing much appreciated”
- “Brilliant that it brings community together”
- “Really informative, engaged my children too”
- “Amazing lovely experience, fantastic music and mood”

Adoption

The central focus of events was equipped participants with the knowledge and resources to re-create the dishes from different parts of the Commonwealth countries and where possible dishes created had ingredients that were readily available within the local area and seasonal.

Cohesion and pride are terms that encapsulate well the effectiveness of the events, as they helped form stronger community links between participants and a sense of pride in seeing a live cooking demonstration of national dishes.

Participants were encouraged to engage during the live cooking demonstrations with the chef to ask questions and a unique aspect of the project came from audience engagement with the display of herbs and spices that formed a 'spice wall' and recipe take-away cards, which were also stored online for digital accessibility. The 'herb wall' presented the opportunity for facilitators to provide handouts and information on growing and caring for herbs within and outside of the home. When tailoring the events towards specific community groups consideration was made towards language, and the lead demonstrator was fluent in at least one native language, in addition to English which was useful for many participants most notably those who spoke Sylheti, Punjabi, Urdu, and Bengali.

Implementation

The project strengthened the awareness of cultural foods from nationals across the Commonwealth and provided an opportunity for participants to learn about cooking methods, different types of ingredients, herbs, and spices, and the knowledge and resources to cook dishes following the event.

A community environment was created in which participants were encouraged to share and discuss their learnings with friends and family following the event. ,

An array of organisations helped in the delivery of the project and contributed to its success on the day and its legacy, from the recruitment of local chefs and catering companies to conduct the cooking demonstrations, to press releases with BBC WM, BBC Radio

WM and video testimonials to the creation of raised beds across Birmingham and the creation of cultural murals in local parks.

Maintenance

The legacy of this project lies within the knowledge, support, and tools provided to the community as participants were equipped with the tools to make sustainable, long-term changes in a manner that is culturally appropriate such as information on cooking healthy dishes, and growing herbs and spices. Furthermore, the legacy spans towards the place, as raised beds with herbs and seeds were donated to organisations across Birmingham, which can help locals benefit from fresh herbs and vegetables being grown within unconventional settings such as front gardens of homes and parks. In addition, murals were created inspired by young people from the local community.

A total of 25 recipes from different Commonwealth countries have been included in the recipe book which encapsulates the dishes cooked during events and is available in a digital format

Mural in Handworth Park, Handworth:



Mural in Georges Park, Lozells:



Raised beds and planters at various locations across Birmingham:



Cost of Living Community Food and Culture Events

The aim of this project was to conduct three community cost of living community food and culture events across Birmingham within local communities of place, in relation to our most deprived wards and areas. During events, affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate meals were cooked during a live demonstration and served to participants. Information leaflets were developed which provided an overview of the meals prepared on the day, alongside the ingredients needed to cook the meal for those who attended. To create a wrap-around model of support, a local asset mapping exercise was conducted in which organisations such as food banks, warm spaces, social and sports activities, financial and housing advice services, and mental health support were conducted to signpost participants to relevant organisations.

This project had many key elements, with the core theme being to provide support, advice, and guidance around healthy eating but also addressing the wider determinants of health, some of the key achievements of the project were:

- Three cost of living food and cultural events, conducted within local community centres
- Collaboration of organisations from supermarkets and farms donating surplus food, faith and religious centres offering support, Arts and community organisations offering resources and most importantly so their time to support workshops.

- Developing recipe cards with a ‘take-home’ option for all participants to cook the foods at home. These ingredients were inexpensive and foods that required minimal energy consumption to keep the cost down when cooking meals at home.
- Food skills and knowledge development, from seeing a meal cooked by a professional chef to prepare the meal at home with recipe cards.
- Wrap-around model development to ensure other aspects which impact the cost of living beyond food but have impacts upon health such as warm spaces, social and sporting activities, financial and housing advice and support.

Reach

Three cost of living events were delivered in the most deprived areas of Birmingham, including Lozells and Smallheath which are inner city wards with high levels of deprivation and amongst the most ethnically diverse wards in Birmingham.

The engagement was focused on maximising local participation and during project initiation, the dissemination of information such as flyers, social media, and local talks within organisations or groups both virtually and face-to-face, which further enabled events to be tailored to specific audiences, such as by attending the Baptist church discussion and observations were able to be made about the characteristics of the congregation and participants who were predominantly from a Black Caribbean background and older age

adults, thus appropriate measures around engagement were able to be made based upon this.

This tailored approach to engagement helped create participation that was inclusive and open to all with a strong focus upon the community with family members in attendance from all ages, multiple faith groups, and ethnicities from across Birmingham, but most notably those local to Small Heath, Lozells, and Perry Barr.

Effectiveness

Cooking demonstrations were conducted live and in a manner in which participants could view and engage with the chef to ask questions regarding cooking methods and could build upon this by using recipe cards and free ingredients to cook meals at home. By conducting targeted community engagement with the wider community, the participation of other community organisations we are able to be made such as donating surplus foods or toiletries which could be offered, in addition to free recipe books to take home which aligned well with the theme of healthy and affordable foods.

Participants were asked to provide feedback on the events and some highlights were: “Nice and well-informed cooking demo. Thank you and I like to meet different people and learn from others”; “Really well organised lots of activities for kids healthy lifestyle promotion”; “Me and my children had a lovely time, we would love to come to future events”; “Thank you for a lovely afternoon, great food a lovely warm welcome from everyone and books and goody bags to take away. I shall enjoy cooking the meal again for myself. I learnt new ideas from fresh vegetables and exercise was good”; and “I have

thoroughly enjoyed today and had an excellent learning experience- Good food, good company and wonderful to be able to have a goody bag to take home”

Adoption

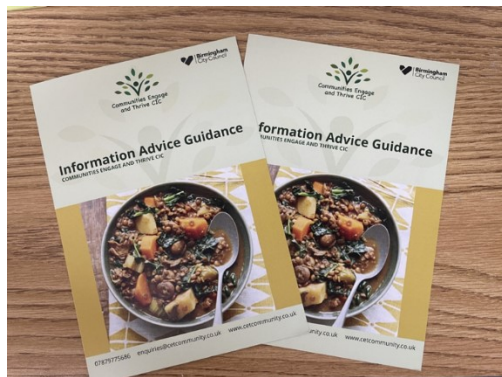
Cooking workshops were conducted at local faith and community based organisations, with wider participation occurring from local and regional organisations keen to be involved in the project, from the capacity of donating time to support information sharing around youth support to the donation of resources such as surplus foods from supermarkets and farms or warm packs, leaflets and information regarding financial and housing support. There was a wide range of support, advice, and guidance provided by a variety of organisations, and an environment of sharing and learning....

Implementation

In total three community cost of living workshops were conducted, with focuses on cost-conscious cooking by conducting demonstrations that included batch cooking, inexpensive ingredients to form a meal, cooked foods that require minimal energy consumption, and foods and meals that can be prepared without the need to cook. The overall aim of the workshops was to build the food skills and knowledge of participants whilst being cost conscious and to enact lifestyle and behaviour change by providing a takeaway bag for participants who attend that included recipe cards and ingredients to prepare the same meals cooked during live demonstrations. Surplus food donated by local supermarkets and

farms was utilised during the take home option to help raise awareness of food waste.

Following the live cooking demonstrations, the day cumulated with a sit-down meal in which participants were able to openly discuss topics with one another and the workshop facilitators such as where is the best place to shop or where to source particular cultural foods or discuss specific conditions such as diabetes, in which registered nutritionists were able to provide advice and guidance.



Maintenance

The information, advice, and guidance provided on the day to participants covered an array of topics areas and culminated in all participants taking home an information advice and guidance leaflet which aimed to assist in the long-term support for participants from the foods they eat to financial or housing advise. A key achievement of this project was the cooking of affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate meals and knowledge sharing opportunities for citizens who need it most, to work towards providing support which can help form resilience and resistance during times of difficulty.

Summary

The idea of arts and culture suggests a sense of belonging and shared identity, upholding identities and beliefs, a set of values, a way to bring people together, an expression of stories, creating a sense of community. Our work during the year of 2022/2023 was aimed towards building an evidence base and valuable community based insights by engaging and championing the inclusive benefits of management and treatment and prevention and promotion arts and culture interventions.

Our projects helped remove barriers to participation to engagement with health interventions by providing direct and targeted communications across trust formal and informal peer-to-peer networks to build a sense of community. Projects were tailored towards important events in which the community could relate which removes apprehension. Building upon this, our focus was targeted towards the method of co-creation by inviting people to be a part of events and take on tasks that provide a sense of ownership to engagement.

The arts, culture and health programme has been a powerful deliverer of engagement across diverse communities, building bridges, and making lasting connections. An inclusive and diverse programme of activity that explores the relationships between arts, culture and health helps promote community cohesion, making health improvements, develop new skills and knowledge whilst engaging with new audiences.