

Evidence and Outcomes

Guidance for Museums and Archives in London

This factsheet aims to provide people working in museums and archives across London with a guide to using evidence and setting outcomes. It highlights why it's important to use evidence, what information may already be available to you and it distils a range of resources that can be used as evidence for your museum or archive. It also outlines the role of outcomes in planning and a case study from Barking and Dagenham demonstrates how an outcome based approach is being implemented across heritage services.

The factsheet forms part of the Strong and Safe programme, led by London Museum Development in partnership with The National Archives.

Why bother?

Now more than ever museums and archives are working to ensure they are clearly demonstrating the impact of their programmes and activities on the people, places and communities they serve. This is especially true for those in receipt of local authority funding and those considering commissioning opportunities. The Local Government Association have outlined the challenges facing local government and proposed solutions to delivery through [Rewiring Public Services](#).

By focusing on evidence and outcomes museums and archives can set realistic goals and be clear about the results of their activities. Evidence can be used as a tool for advocacy, fundraising and for gaining recognition through standards (including Accreditation) and awards. It can also give you and your staff confidence and pride in your achievements. When used alongside an outcome framework you can clearly see the results of your work which can be motivational for everyone.

Museum and archives gather a range of evidence in a variety of formats whether thinking about it or not. This can include visitor numbers, data for funding programmes, reporting or feedback from visitors through evaluation forms and online social media channels.

What you've got?

Evidence exists in a variety of forms and can be outlined in terms of hard and soft data. Examples of both are outlined in the table below.

Hard data	Soft data
Visitor numbers	Verbal feedback from visitors to front of house staff
Written visitor feedback (including reviews on Trip Advisor, Twitter and Facebook)	Volunteer and staff observations
Digital engagement figures (including website hits/Facebook likes/ Twitter followers)	Observations in exhibition spaces

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National and local statistics: census data and national participation information (eg. Taking Part)	Overheard comments
Demographic information about visitors and project participants (including school groups and event related data)	Verbal feedback from stakeholders, staff and volunteers
Staff and volunteer data	Drawings
Budgets	Photographs


Many museums will have other sources of hard and soft data which may relate to specific areas of work such as, the impact on wellbeing and mental health and/or their economic impact on the local area.

Accredited museums must collect data on their users and stakeholders and demonstrate that they have 'a clear awareness of the breadth of current users and stakeholders, informed by the collection of data on users.' This should be evidenced through the forward plan (requirement 1.4).

Examples of hard evidence through social media platforms below are the Trip Advisor page for The Discovery Museum and a sample tweet from Yorkshire Museum.

The Discovery Museum
 1,091 Reviews | #6 of 136 things to do in Newcastle upon Tyne | Certificate of Excellence
 History Museums, Science Museums, Museums | As featured in 3 Days in Newcastle upon Tyne and 2 other guides

Overview | Reviews (1,091) | Q&A (2) | Location



TripAdvisor Reviewer Highlights

Read all 1,091 reviews

Visitor rating

Rating	Count
Excellent	640
Very good	338
Average	60
Poor	13
Terrible	12

"First timers"
 Today we visited the Discovery museum for the first time. After a wonderful Sunday lunch we needed somewhere to walk it off and this was well worth a visit. We had a look around a... [read more](#)

Tom S. Reviewed 2 days ago via mobile

Yorkshire Museum
 @YorkshireMuseum

We're working with @britishmuseum to bring amazing #Viking treasure hoards found in Britain to our museum this May!
yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/news-media/lat...



RETWEETS 85 | LIKES 200

8:00 AM - 23 Jan 2017

National Data: Taking Part

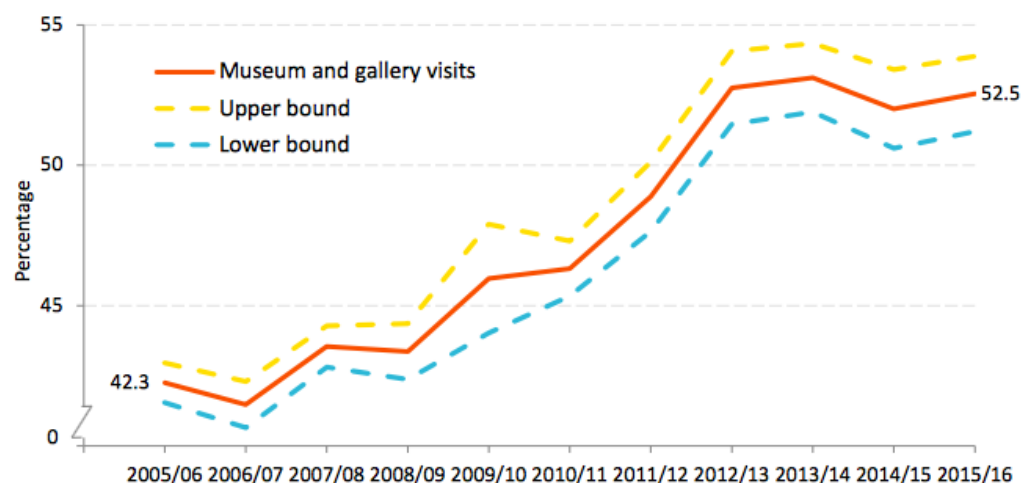
Taking Part provides national participation data and trends in on site and digital participation in: Arts, Heritage, Museums and galleries, Libraries, Archives. It also highlights; volunteering time, charitable giving, equalities, special Events (including First World War commemorative events) and the impact culture has on wellbeing. The data from Taking Part demonstrates trends in activity over the last ten years.

The latest release of data (31/01/2017) highlights a steady rise in the proportion of adults who visited a museum or gallery since 2005. 'In the year to September 2016, 53.6 per cent of adults visited a museum or gallery, a significant increase from 2005/06 (42.3 per cent).' The proportion of visits to archives has decreased from 5.1 per cent in 2005/06 to 3.1 per cent in September 2016.

The report also highlights that 'The proportion of adults who visited a **museum or gallery website** significantly increased from 15.8 per cent in 2005/06 to 28.7 per cent in the year to September 2016.' See Appendix 1 for museums infographic.

The graph below demonstrates the steady rise in visits to museums and galleries from 2005 to July 2016 (taken from [Statistical release 2015/16 Quarter 4 report](#))

Figure 3.1: Proportion of adults who had visited a museum or gallery in the last year, 2005/06 to 2015/16



Notes:

- (1) Confidence intervals range between +/-0.7 and +/-1.9 from 2005/06 onwards.
- (2) The upper and lower bounds show the 95 per cent confidence interval.

Sources of data

The table below outlines sources of data which you may wish to use to support project and funding bids. This data should be considered as support material to your own local evidence. It is also worth noting that this is not a comprehensive, exhaustive or static list. It highlights current information available relating to the impact of museums on a range of areas. However, it does not refer specifically to evidence supporting the role of museums in education.

Data source	What it offers	Context
Taking Part Data Analysis Tools	Data in participation across arts, heritage, museums and galleries and archives. It is a continuous face to face household survey which has run since 2005. It is the main evidence source for DCMS and its sectors.	National – culture wide.
The Office for National Statistics: 2011 Census Data Neighbourhood statistics	The UK censuses statistics provide ‘a detailed snapshot of the population and its characteristics, and underpin funding allocation to provide public services.’ ¹ The UK censuses last took place on 27 March 2011.	National – with ability to search for neighbourhood statistics. Refer to your own local authority website for a snapshot of statistics specific to your area.
The Audience Agency, Audience Finder	A free national audience data and development tool, enabling cultural organisations to understand, compare and apply audience insight. Arts Council England funded.	Registration required. Source of data from over 140 museums across England.
CASE (Culture and Sport Evidence) programme	Developed to directly influence culture and sport policy. It provides the following data for arts, museums and archives (where available): Capital investment, levels of public (exchequer and Lottery) and private capital funding, tourism, education, community and well-being, engagement and physical asset	National with ability to filter regional and local details. It was last updated in 2012.
Museums Matter	Highlights the impact museums have on the following public policy priorities: diverse cultural life, regional prosperity, developing tourism, strengthening the UK’s soft power, peaceful and prosperous communities, health and well-being, education, life-long learning, skills development and apprenticeships, world leaders in scientific, technological and creative innovation	National advocacy tool
The Economic Impact of	An analysis of the direct and indirect economic impact of	National overview – highlights lack of

¹ Office for National Statistics, [2011 Census data](#), 2/02/17

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Museums	museums	regional or trend data.
Evaluating the Evidence: The Impact of Charging or Not for Admissions on Museums	AIM research for museums which highlights the impact of charging for admission. The research is accompanied by a guide that museums can use to help make decisions about whether an admission charge is right for their museum and if so, what price they should set.	National – with a guide to support individual decisions related to charging.
AIM Economic Impact Toolkit 2014	A toolkit for AIM members which they can use to estimate the impact they may have on their local economy. It looks at the impact on: Tourism, employment and goods and services.	The latest report was compiled in 2010
Museums and Wellbeing Toolkit , UCL	A set of scales of measurement used to assess levels of wellbeing arising from participation in museum and gallery activities that has been trialled across the UK.	A national toolkit
Summary of AGE UK's Wellbeing Index	This AGE UK reports highlights creative and cultural participation scoring highest in its contribution to wellbeing in later life.	Creative and cultural participation is defined as: Taking part in 'a wide range of activities, including dance, playing a musical instrument, a carnival or street arts event, gone to the cinema, an arts exhibition or music event and visited museums, historical sites, or libraries.'
Mind, body, spirit: how museums impact health and wellbeing , University of Leicester	The findings of a year-long action research project which sets out to show how museums are well placed to respond to changes in public health.	Research was based in the East Midlands.

How to use it?

How to use the available evidence will depend on your objectives. This is where an outcomes based framework can help. An outcome based framework sets out the outcomes and corresponding indicators against which achievements can be measured. It is an approach based on results.

Some key questions to ask ahead of you developing your framework are:

- Who is it for?
- What are you trying to change?
- What if any benchmark data do you have?
- How does your proposed programme of activity align with your local authorities priorities?
- Who will you involve in the process of developing the framework?
- How will you monitor progress?

Every borough will have their own priorities which are usually outlined within a local plan or strategy document. These can be used as the basis of developing your own framework for your museum and/or archive.

Commissioning – a note:

A wealth of resources exist which aim to support people working in museums archives to engage in the commissioning process, ‘a process that public sector organisations use to plan, procure, deliver and evaluate services for local residents’². There is a directory to commissioning related resources at the end of this guide (Appendix 2).

Barking and Dagenham – Case Study

In June 2016 Barking and Dagenham Council Cabinet adopted a new Heritage Strategy. The strategy sets out a shared vision and a framework that supports the ‘development and promotion of the Borough’s heritage’. This was achieved through the adoption of an outcomes based approach to planning. Chris Foord, Group Manager, Heritage Services shared his key points of note in developing this approach.

Start Early

Chris took part in the London Museum Development ‘local authority museums improvement programme’ in 2007 when he was working at Greenwich. Through this training Chris developed a deeper awareness of local authority priorities and how to align the goals of the heritage service with wider local ambitions.

Benchmarking and alignment

Initially Barking and Dagenham heritage service did not have any data to benchmark. They looked 5-10 years ahead to identify what they could start to measure as outcomes through

² NCVO, Know How Non-profit, [What is Commissioning](#), 19.01.17

the activities already underway. Chris knew that the outcomes for the heritage strategy must align with the councils' priorities and used this as a basis for the outcomes framework. It was helpful that the council leader was supportive of heritage but they needed to develop robust evidence to support claims of wider impact and so that they could effectively advocate its activities across the council, not just with the leader.

Developing the framework

In compiling the service outcomes framework there was consideration given to who should take part and at what stage. This included facilitated workshops with some and all staff, the leadership team, Director and volunteers. There was also a process of self-assessment.

Each outcome for the service can be linked to the vision for Barking and Dagenham; 'One borough, One community, London's growth opportunity.' The outcomes were distilled to priorities which became an action plan for the next few years. These priorities were assigned performance measures from which progress is monitored and advocated.

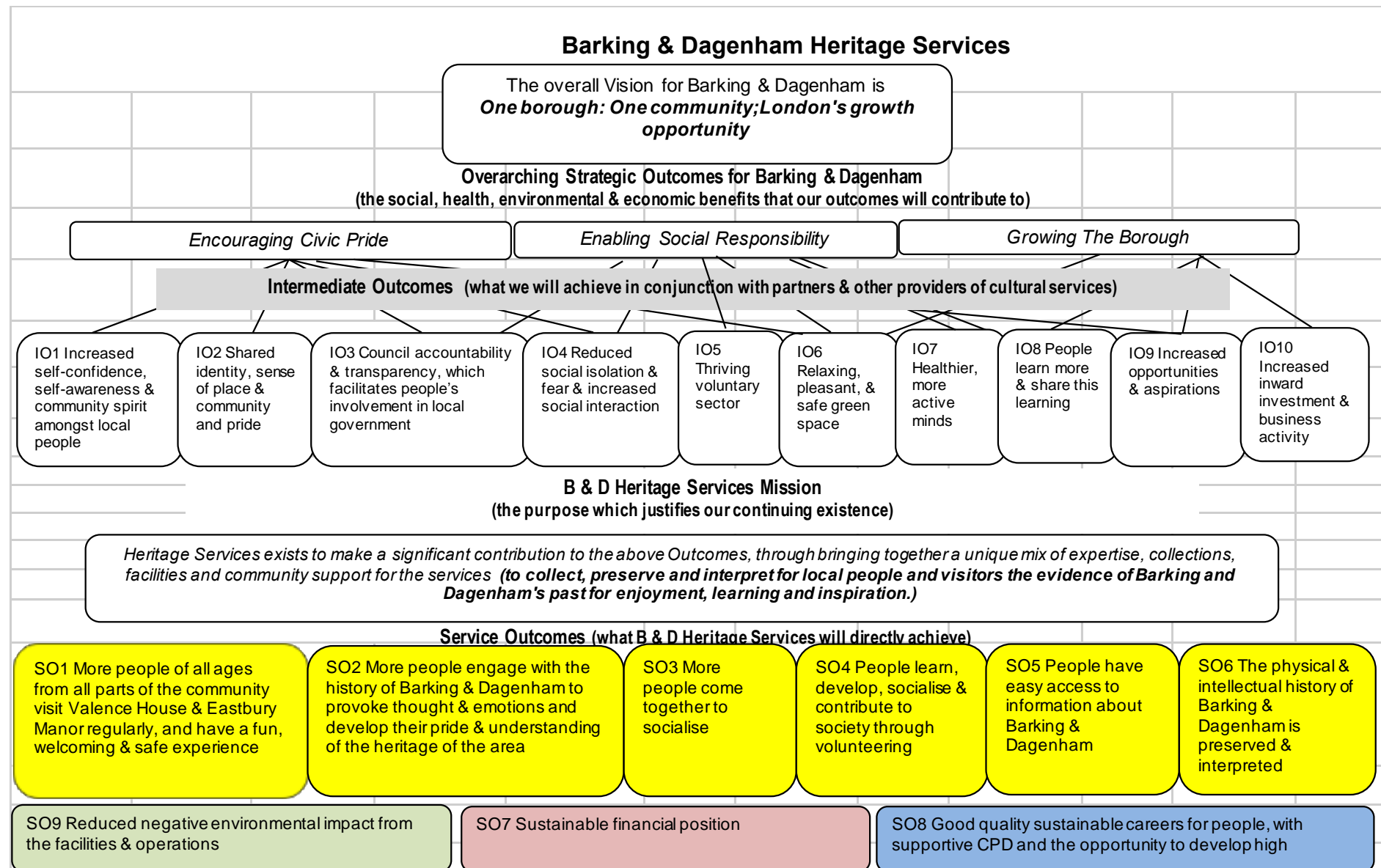
Data collection

Selected data is collected monthly, through surveys and other forms of evidence, including accident reports. One of the outcomes they have focused on is the heritage service providing a 'welcome and safe experience'. Using the data they collect on the number of accidents in a year supports their progress in relation to this outcome. The outcomes are reviewed on a yearly basis to check they are still relevant

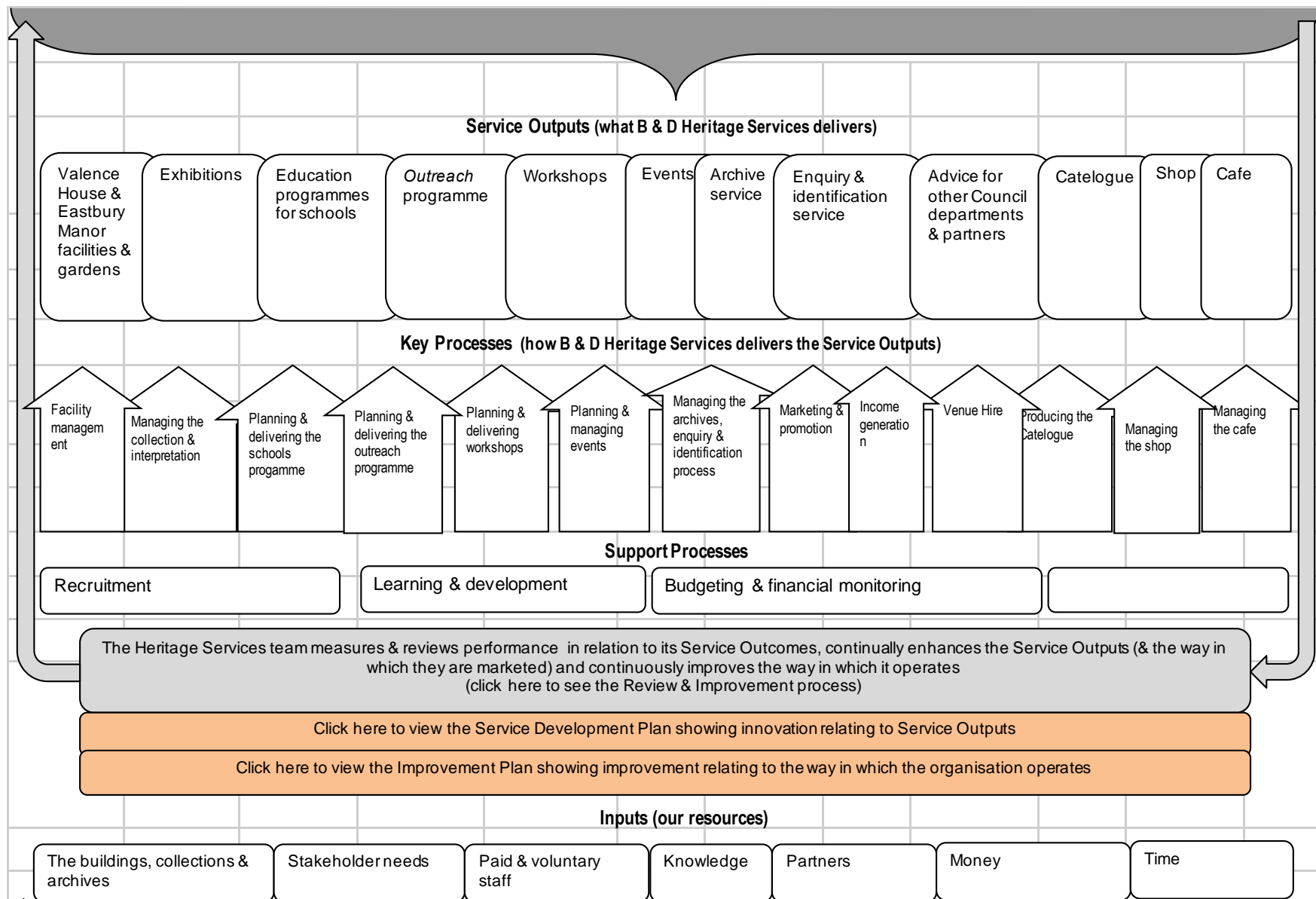
Impact

The outcomes based framework has been a powerful advocacy tool. Heritage and culture underpin the growth of the local area. The service has not suffered budget reductions. The Council leader and executive have retained heritage as part of core services. They did consider moving to trust and the Chief executive decided to hold on to heritage. Through the framework the heritage service has successfully demonstrated how it is feeding into the council priorities. Key to its success was a change in a way of organisational thinking. This has had wider benefits as the outcomes based approach supported HLF applications and Archive and Museum Accreditation. In addition, staff within the service now automatically look to the broader implications and areas of support for projects. It's a significant shift in thinking from service based activity to projects and outcomes.

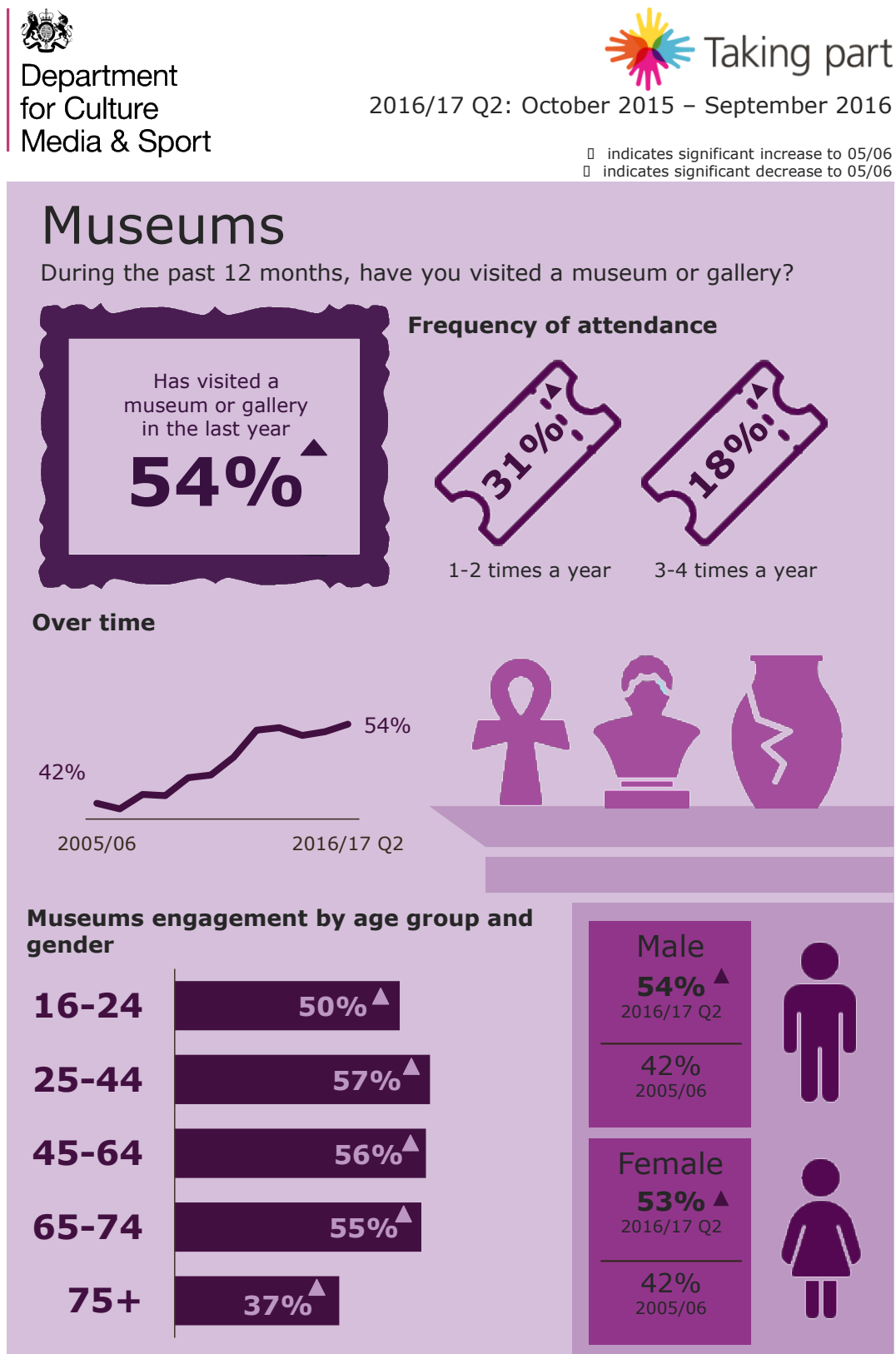
Below is an overview of the heritage services high level outcomes demonstrating how they relate to the overall vision for Barking and Dagenham. A full version of the Outcomes Framework Plan can be found [on the website](#).



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Appendix 1: Taking Part Museums infographic



Appendix 2: Further information and resources

Context:

Local Government Association, [Rewiring Public Services](#) this animation provides an outline of the challenges facing local government and proposes solutions to delivery in constrained financial environments.

[Rewiring public services, Rejuvenating Democracy:](#)

This supporting paper sets out the changes needed at both a local and national level so that public services can help communities to meet people's future needs and aspirations.

Commissioning Resources:

Culture and Sport Improvement: <http://www.local.gov.uk/culture-and-sport-improvement>

NCVO, Know How Know Profit: [Commissioning and Procurement](#)

LGA, [Guide to outcomes based approach for culture, tourism and sport](#)

The following resources have been developed for archives but the content is also applicable to museums.

[Measuring outcomes for archives](#)

A web toolkit that provides guidance for all types of archive services, not just those in local authorities, on how to create a local outcomes framework. Creating a framework will help archives measure and evidence the difference they make and the contribution to local priorities. It will also help make the case for continued investment of public money, develop persuasive funding bids and engage with a wide range of stakeholders.

[Engaging in commissioning for archives:](#)

A practical web-resource pack for archive services with an interest in engaging in commissioning. The resources were developed as part of the Catalyst Giving Value programme to support the UK archive sector, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. They are intended to promote awareness in the archives sector of the commissioning process, the language and terminology, and to generate thinking around how archives might engage with other public services through commissioning, and so contribute to better outcomes for individuals and communities. The emphasis is on archives being commissioned by other areas of service – rather than being commissioners themselves.

Putting culture and sport at the heart of strategic commissioning – [a briefing note](#)

produced by the LGA for Councilors' with a responsibility for culture and sport (which usually includes archives); Cllrs have a key role to play actively engaging with their colleagues in the strategic service planning and commissioning processes by making the case for the contribution of culture and sport can make to wider community services and by ensuring culture and sport services are 'commissioner ready'.

Cultural Commissioning Programme

The Cultural Commissioning Programme is a [three year Arts Council England funded programme](#) that aims to help the arts and cultural sector develop skills and capacity to engage in cultural commissioning. On the website there are a number of [resources on cultural commissioning](#) including case studies, articles, blogs, advice from commissioners and a research report on cultural commissioning.

Measurement and evaluation tools that commissioners use –

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) is often used by scientists and psychologists to measure wellbeing. It is based around a self-assessment process that comprises of positively phrased statements such as ‘I’ve been feeling optimistic about the future’ and ‘I’ve been interested in new things’. It’s relatively simple to use and analyse to build your evidence base. [Wellbeing self-assessment tool](#) on the NHS Choices website

Outcomes Star is a suite of tools used in supporting and measuring change in vulnerable individuals. It is used in social care in areas such as mental health and learning disability. There is also an [Older Person's Star](#), which has a focus on re-enablement and measures progress towards maximising independence and well-being. The full suite is available on the [Outcomes Star website](#).

[Dementia care mapping](#), which is used to evaluate the quality from the perspective of the person living with dementia. It involves evaluating levels of interaction and participation among a small group over a period of time; it enables cross-validation and is therefore a robust mechanism.

[The Public Health Outcomes Framework – 2013 to 2016](#). This framework provides the broad context within which HWBs develop local priorities. It concentrates on increased healthy life expectancy and reducing differences in life expectancy between communities.

[Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework – 2015 to 2016](#) The ASCOF sets out a framework for measuring how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people.

[Q&A with Dr Shirley Woods-Gallagher, Greater Manchester Public Service Reform Team \(PDF\)](#) Shirley talks about the sort of evidence of impact that commissioners are looking for and gives practical tips on how can arts and cultural organisations show that their work makes a difference.

Advice and Support

Museum Development, London Team:

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You can follow the Museum Development team on [Twitter](#).

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