



SPIRIT
OF **2012**

INVESTING IN HAPPINESS
CREATING IMPACT THROUGH FUNDING EVENT LEGACIES



This reports presents highlights from the external evaluation report by InFocus on the impact of the first three years of Spirit’s funding. It describes how we are keeping the spirit of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games alive by investing in projects which leave a lasting social legacy.



Spirit of 2012 was established by the Big Lottery Fund and endowed with National Lottery grant funds.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to InFocus Enterprises for their evaluation report work. We also thank our partners for the use of project photos for this report and for quotes included. Any unattributed quotes are taken from external evaluation reports, for which we thank InFocus Enterprises.

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FOREWORD

by ALAN COPPIN

I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed as the Spirit of 2012 Chair. It is a wonderful charity - investing in happiness, by grant funding arts, physical activity and sport and volunteering, in genuinely inclusive ways is close to my own heart and interests.

The commitment to learning how to achieve good outcomes for people and communities sets Spirit apart as a funder. Evidence from the recent inFocus report suggests that our small organisation is influencing the agendas and methodologies of more established and larger funders, and that our voice is part of the national conversation about wellbeing.



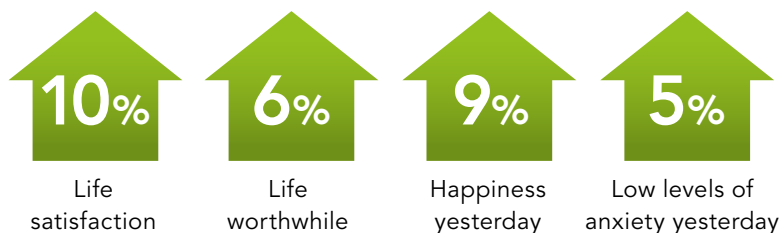
I am grateful to Spirit's founding Chair, Dugald Mackie, whose experienced and wise leadership established the organisation on a sound footing. I feel proud and privileged to be taking up the reins, and am determined to do all I can over the next few years, alongside Board colleagues and the executive, to enable Spirit to fulfil its ambition to improve wellbeing, increase social cohesion and transform perceptions and attitudes (including self-perceptions) towards disability and impairment.

The focus on using National Lottery money so generously endowed by the Big Lottery Fund to build lasting social legacies inspired by major events is Spirit's USP. I join the Board as Hull 2017 UK City of Culture is in full swing, with the centenary of women's suffrage coming up next year and during our continuing, successful Legacy 2014 partnership with the Scottish Government to increase levels of healthy physical activity in the least active population groups.

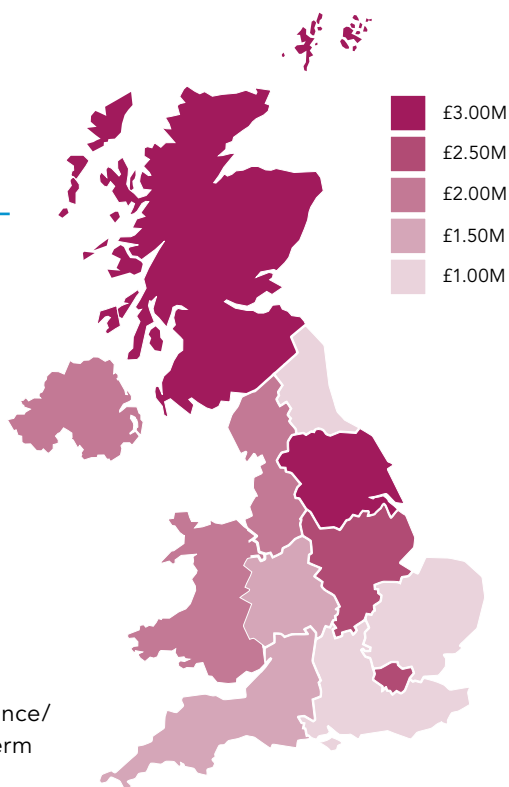
I greatly look forward to seeing Spirit funding in action, engaging with our Youth Advisory Panel, meeting beneficiaries, and to developing and implementing more exciting project ideas in the future.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

IMPROVED WELLBEING



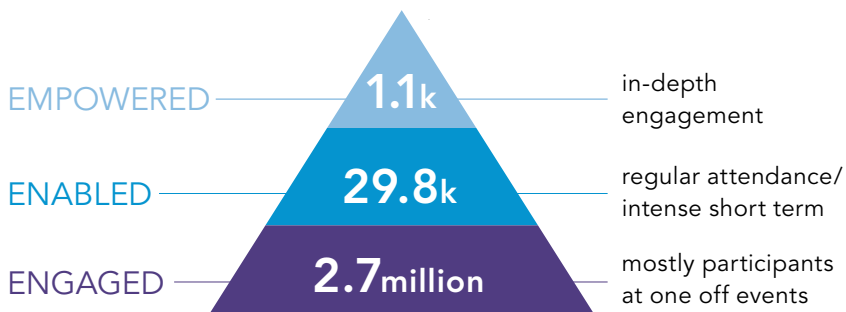
PROJECT LOCATIONS



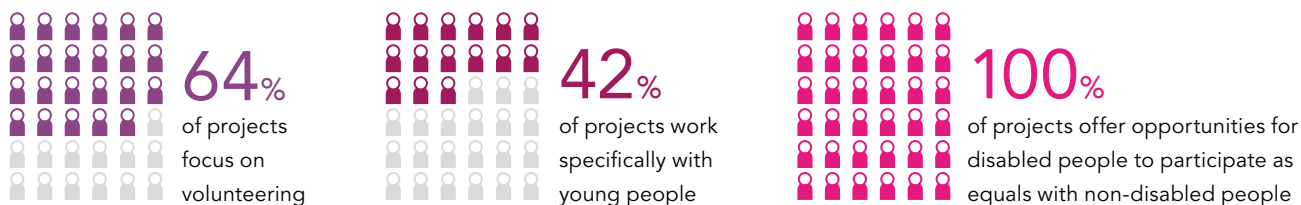
NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES



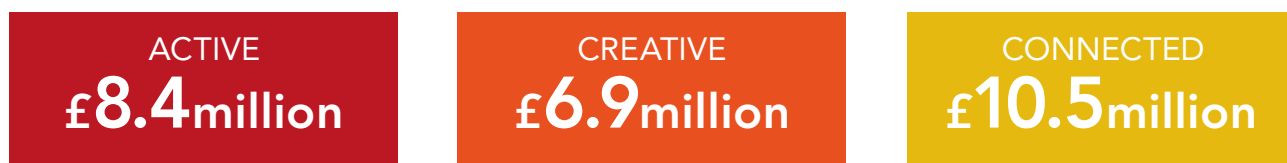
LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT



PROJECT FOCUS



SPENDING PORTFOLIO



ABOUT SPIRIT OF 2012

WE EXIST TO:

Improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and society as a whole.

▶ See more on pages 8 & 9

Improve perceptions (including self perceptions) and attitudes towards disability and impairment.

▶ See more on pages 10 & 11

Lead to greater social cohesion and understanding.

▶ See more on pages 12 & 13

We do this by enabling people to participate in a wide range of inclusive activities, and engage together in their communities.

Our funding is divided into three portfolios:

- ✦ **Active:** Providing opportunities for the inactive in society to become more physically active.
- ✦ **Creative:** Providing opportunities for people to explore their creative sides through a wide variety of art forms and cultural experiences.
- ✦ **Connected:** Providing opportunities for people to come together from diverse backgrounds as equals and shape their communities.

Even though there has been a lot of work involved, it is making us a stronger organisation... since we got the Spirit funding we have attracted other funding - we've won awards, there are all kinds of things that have happened, it's almost been like a magnet. So for all the hard work that's gone in, the reward has definitely come out the other end. This has been because of the Spirit funding.

Summative Evaluation, InFocus, 2017

The phrase 'critical friend' was often cited by grantees when referring to Spirit. As stated by a grantee, they have held a mirror up to us and challenged us but in a very positive way, I think Spirit staff have knowledge and expertise in the sector, and are respected by others for it.

Summative Evaluation, InFocus, 2017

The flexibility that Spirit has shown has been greatly appreciated by grantees. Spirit has been able to balance being flexible, with maintaining a rigorous outcome focused approach.

*Summative Evaluation,
InFocus, 2017*

Spirit of 2012's early recognition of and support for the UK City of Culture project was crucial in helping us build momentum towards our exciting mission.

*Martin Green, Chief Executive,
Hull City of Culture 2017*

Spirit of 2012 are brilliant to work with. They are a very hands-on funder in a way that ensures we are always reflecting and learning.

*Will Sadler, Development Director,
Beacon Hill Arts*

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

There is no single path to achieving our impact goals. The following principles guide our funding:

- ✦ Inspiring events – used well, within and external to projects – are often the spark that generates wider change.
- ✦ Regular, sustained participation is critical to changing social outcomes.
- ✦ High quality volunteering opportunities enrich both projects and the lives of volunteers themselves.
- ✦ Young people can be empowered by developing new skills and finding a voice in their communities
- ✦ Removing barriers to participation is vital to ensure projects benefit underserved groups and communities.
- ✦ Forming effective partnerships extends the reach and amplifies the impact of projects.

WELLBEING

Improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and society as a whole.

HEADLINES:

Participation - getting involved with other people in almost any positive activity - increases wellbeing.

Spirit has supported more than **2.7 million** people to participate in arts, sports and culture since 2013.

Volunteers report enhanced levels of wellbeing. To date, we have supported more than **25,000** people to give back to their communities.

Projects with sustained volunteer / participant engagement are more likely to demonstrate wellbeing improvements than those that only engage volunteers / participants in a one-off activity.

Spirit funding has improved participants' lives in the four main areas of Wellbeing:

9% increase in the number of participants reporting 'life satisfaction'

5% increase in the number of participants who feel 'life is worthwhile'

10% increase in the number of participants who felt 'happy yesterday'

5t% increase in participants who had 'low levels of anxiety yesterday'

(Responses to ONS Subjective Wellbeing Questions)



PEOPLE: NEIL, *GET OUT GET ACTIVE* VOLUNTEER

Dedicated volunteers make many of Spirit's programmes possible, including *Get Out Get Active (GOGA)* Spirit's £4.5 million physical activity programme, led by EFDS. Neil credits volunteering with improving his own life and helping him return to employment. Neil explains:

"If you had seen me before I started volunteering, I was a mess; I didn't really take care of my appearance, I was overweight, I was an alcoholic and I was depressed all the time."

Neil regularly volunteers with young disabled people in his community, and his new-found skills and confidence have recently helped him to get a new job.



PLACES: CREGGAN

One of the communities benefiting from Spirit's £3.5 million *Fourteen* programme is Creggan in Derry/Londonderry. A group of volunteers from the area were brought together with the ambitious aim of making a difference to the wellbeing of their community. Supported by the Old Library Trust and Springboard, this Local Reference Group now makes funding decisions, prioritising projects that will most benefit their community.

One such project, *Step Forward*, gives people with long-term health conditions a chance to socialise and get active in regular classes. Joan, who is diabetic, described the powerful impact of the supportive sessions on her own wellbeing, explaining:

“The classes get me out of bed! If I hadn’t been to them, I don’t know where I’d be today.”

The emphasis on partnership working enabled the Local Reference Groups to take a more holistic view of their communities’ wellbeing. Over the duration of the project, there’s an 11% increase in *Fourteen* NI participants with high life satisfaction scores.



PRACTICE: THE LEGACY 2014 FUND, SCOTLAND

Measuring subjective wellbeing is a new and often daunting experience for many Spirit partners. In the Scottish Government’s Legacy 2014 Fund we required partners to capture the social benefits of their work alongside their main focus on increasing physical activity levels in their communities.

Like all Spirit grantees, they did this using the ONS Subjective Wellbeing Questions at the start and end of projects to monitor changes in participants’ wellbeing and life satisfaction.

They found that the social aspect was crucial for securing and sustaining engagement: A warm welcome, a reassuring phone call and a cup of tea with a chat made all the difference.

Spirit embedded this learning across all of the organisations’ work, creating a lasting legacy from the Fund that stretches far beyond the impact on the 8,000 individuals who took part and now informs all our grant-making.

WHAT NEXT?

Spirit will continue to gather information on how best to increase wellbeing through participation, exploring data patterns to find out what works best for different groups in their very diverse contexts.

We are also boosting our support for projects to review their own wellbeing data, so they can improve their practice as they go and share what they’ve experienced with others.



PERCEPTIONS OF DISABILITY

Improve perceptions (including self-perceptions) and attitudes towards disability.

HEADLINES:

Spirit of 2012's funding model requires our partners to commit to providing opportunities in their projects for disabled people to participate as equals.

We have data showing that Spirit projects have increased the number of disabled people who feel engaged in their community.

Spirit has invested £4.5 million into *Get Out Get Active* – a programme led by the English Federation of Disability Sport that delivers inclusive physical activity sessions in eighteen locations for some of the country's least active people, including disabled people together with their families and friends.

Collecting comparable data for this outcome is challenging, but we are proud that many of our partners have embraced that challenge, using innovative techniques to gather evidence and discover what works best to make physical activity genuinely inclusive.



PEOPLE: PAULINE, ARTIST, NEWCASTLE

Pauline is a disabled artist who has been supported by Spirit and Stockton Arc's *Cultural Shift* project. She explains:

"I had become quite isolated, disillusioned and detached from the art and disability arts worlds. It was proving very hard to get work, with fewer opportunities being created, particularly in my area. Now, a transformation has taken place. I am in a new position professionally, with a disabled led arts organisation wanting to take my work to the next level."

As a direct result of Spirit funding, Pauline has gone on to produce well-received work that challenges misconceptions and stereotypes around disability and is now exposed to a much wider audience.



PLACES: ARTS VENUES ACROSS THE UK

Unlimited Impact supports arts and cultural venues to build their capacity and confidence in welcoming disabled artists and audiences. From 2013 – 2015, Spirit funding helped to improve provision for disabled people in venues across the UK through practical support to overcome

access barriers, staff training and the promotion of disabled artists. One venue noted:

“Working with Unlimited has revolutionised our understanding of what equality of opportunity really means and the richness that can be gained when it is genuinely supported by the conditions we create.”



PRACTICE: INCLUSIVE FUTURES

Inclusive Futures was a volunteering initiative run by the Youth Sport Trust (YST) in nine UK cities. It addressed the underrepresentation of young disabled people within the volunteering community by offering opportunities for disabled and non-disabled people to participate together in training programmes, volunteer placements and national and regional camps; 84% of participants reported increased happiness as a result of their involvement. Over 70% ‘strongly agreed’ that they were more likely to participate in volunteering in the future as a result.

Learning from *Inclusive Futures* has challenged and improved Youth Sport Trust practice, enshrining a policy of clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities of parents, teachers and carers, in line with MENCAP guidance

for supporting people with learning disabilities. YST now carry out full analysis of individual inclusion plans for all the young people they work with to identify the resources they need to flourish.

WHAT NEXT?

We will continue to ensure that all Spirit’s projects commit to making a positive difference for disabled people. We will also be moving forward on the recommendation in our external evaluation to work with potential grantees in identifying how projects can become as inclusive as possible.

We will be sharing expert guidelines on improving perceptions of disability in projects, and will soon also be able to share significant findings in this area from our *Get Out Get Active* programme.



SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Lead to greater social cohesion and understanding.

HEADLINES:

Spirit funds projects that encourage people to take a lead in their own communities.

Spirit grantees report a host of benefits across this outcome - ranging from increased pride in communities to better engagement among local people, and more young people saying they feel listened to.

Our grants support training to help young people to influence decision-makers, and forums that enable community representatives to have a say in how funding is spent in their areas. We prioritise projects that give beneficiaries a voice and really do work for local people.

A real Spirit focus is people who have become isolated from their community. This happens for many reasons - age, ill-health, bereavement, poverty, social stigma and lack of confidence. We fund projects that work to reconnect isolated people to their communities.

Our data returns show that Spirit projects are reaching people who are more anxious than the national average, and that participating in them helps reduce their anxiety.



PEOPLE: PAT, HULL 2017 VOLUNTEER

Our evidence suggests that active participation is linked to an increased feeling of local community. Pat is one of over 2,500 volunteers taking part in Hull's City of Culture 2017 year. She has MS, but has still been able to participate in a range of events – from the New Year's Day celebrations to starring as a cast member in an outdoor circus show.

Pat feels that her horizons have expanded and her social skills have improved through her volunteering. She explained:

"In the past, I have put Hull down and have been a bit ashamed to say that I lived here, but (since volunteering) I have embraced it and actually fallen in love with it. I'm proud of it now."

Hull 2017 research suggests that Pat's feelings are replicated across the city, with the residents' survey reporting an increase in local pride.





PLACES: BRADFORD, WOW FESTIVAL

In 2016, Spirit funding helped Bradford hold its first ever *Women of the World (WOW)* festival. The Southbank Centre collaborated with local people of all ages and backgrounds to plan and produce the three-day event, which recognised the achievements of women and girls whilst taking a frank look at what stops them from achieving their potential in Bradford. The festival demonstrated how an inspirational event can act as a catalyst for increasing social connectedness across a city. External evaluation of the festival documented at least 39 different partnerships, opportunities and regular events that emerged as a direct result. One participant explained: “I gained a lot of confidence meeting strangers all the time and it gave me a newfound love for Bradford and a stronger connection with the city”.



PRACTICE: ENGLAND RUGBY RFU

Spirit’s 2015 Rugby World Cup legacy initiative worked in 15 communities across England, with 16 to 24-year-olds who designed projects which used rugby to increase community cohesion and attract a greater diversity of rugby players and followers. In Northampton volunteers engaged the growing local Eastern European population in their club, developing a social media campaign, website and promotional video translated

into six different languages. The project has been vital in strengthening relationships with previously excluded communities; Alex Le Guevel of Northamptonshire Sport, explained: “The project has offered us the perfect opportunity to provide targeted work to new groups and communities across the county and as a result of it, the foundations of a stronger collective rugby community in Northamptonshire have been laid”.

Manchester Spartans worked with Manchester Pride to increase LGBT engagement in rugby. Ali, who was new to Manchester when he found out about the project, said:

“I didn’t know anyone in the city, but the Spartans introduced me to a whole network of people.”

The initiative has been hugely successful and was a finalist in the 2017 National Lottery Awards. Other rugby clubs are now replicating it.

WHAT NEXT?

Spirit is increasingly focused on this impact area – as our CEO, Debbie Lye, explains in more detail on page 14 – and we are looking forward to sharing the final evaluations from our investments in Hull 2017 and Fourteen next year. We are also supporting the Verbal Arts Centre in Derry/Londonderry to work with ex-offenders to rebuild their social networks via the Reading Rooms project.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SPIRIT?

by DEBBIE LYE

Spirit is now established as a funder focused on achieving individual and social outcomes measured through our Theory of Change framework. Some grantees find Spirit a challenging and demanding funder. Others thrive on our insistence that beneficiary impact should inform each stage of planning, delivery and evaluation.

It enables them to present a stronger case to other funders, and several have received large grants and reputational boosts as a result of the rigorous approach we asked of them.

Over four years as Spirit Chief Executive I've seen lives changed, and know that Spirit has helped thousands.

I am grateful for the backing of a passionate, committed and generous Board, with a diversity of professional expertise, who have trusted and supported us to be a different kind of funder.

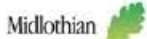
The InFocus evaluation report gives us the confidence to persist with our approach, and the appetite to do more where there are still gaps. I am particularly pleased that Spirit is working with Professor Ted Cattle's Institute of Community Cohesion, and to have secured the expertise of the Behavioural Insights Team to support our grantees in drawing out and acting on learning.

So what next? We will award two large grants next year to promote social cohesion through cricket and supporting girls and young women to tackle social issues that matter to them.

Our Board is ambitious for Spirit to continue beyond the ten year term of our endowment. That will only happen if major funders see added value in investing through us. More, and more insightful, learning about how our grant-making approach changes people's lives for the better will do more than anything else to make a compelling proposition.



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PARTNERS





Room 100, New Wing,
Somerset House, Strand,
London WC2R 1LA

www.spiritof2012trust.org.uk

Charity Number: 1155110

f @spiritof2012

t @Spiritof2012

in Spirit of 2012

@ @spiritof2012hq

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