



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



'TURNER'S OXFORD'

Evaluation of a public engagement programme

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INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the Ashmolean Museum ran a successful funding campaign to secure the acquisition of J. M. W Turner's oil painting of 'The High Street, Oxford.' A grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF,) made a significant impact toward the Museum's fundraising effort and supported the development of an activity programme, designed to allow as many people as possible to access and enjoy this significant painting.



From January to September 2016, the painting was used to inspire a series of projects and activities targeting families, schools, young people, adults and community groups. During this time a research team from the University of Oxford was recruited to document the *breadth and depth* of the activities on offer at the museum which had been specifically designed to engage the public with the recent acquisition piece. A full list of the HLF activities, their audiences, and participating numbers can be found in Appendix C.

The evaluation was twofold; two ongoing projects would be studied 'in-depth' from their design to completion, alongside three standalone sessions, which were considered representative of the Ashmolean Museum's core offer for schools, families, and adults.

The overarching aim of the evaluation was:

- To assess the difference that projects made in terms of heritage
- To evaluate the difference that the projects made for people and communities

Each project, workshop, and audience had additionally envisaged aims. These have been discussed as case studies and can be found in the Appendix (sections A and B).

THE HIGH STREET, OXFORD (1810) BY JMW TURNER



The High Street, Oxford is unique in Turner's output and in the history of English art. It represents one of the most beautiful streets in Europe, a street which has materially changed little since Turner painted it. Although he painted many townscapes in watercolour, Turner never again attempted such a picture in oils.

Acknowledged as one of the greatest landscape artists of all time, Turner painted over thirty finished watercolours of Oxford views, by far the most numerous group devoted to a single place in his entire output. He was familiar with the architecture of the city, having visited relations in the village of Sunningwell (five miles south-west of Oxford) during his childhood. In 1799, he received his most prestigious commission to date, to provide two designs for the University's annual calendar, the Oxford Almanack. The success of these two watercolours led to commissions for a further eight, published between 1799 and 1810. They show a deliberately wide variety of street scenes, colleges and interiors. It was, no doubt, the quality of these pictures that led Oxford print seller, James Wyatt, to commission the view of the High Street.

The painting is one of the most fully documented of all Turner's works because Wyatt kept his correspondence with the artist which was included in his posthumous sale. The original purpose of the commission was to have the design engraved. Wyatt settled on an oil painting, instead of a watercolour, half the size of Turner's normal canvases, at the cost of 100 guineas. The artist worked on the painting over the winter of 1809–10, consulting Wyatt on the details of the architecture included in the view.

The final stage involved the introduction of figures, members of the University and clergy, and some women 'for the sake of colour'. The painting was completed in March 1810 and was exhibited in Wyatt's shop before being shown at Turner's own gallery in his house in Queen Ann Street. Wyatt was evidently delighted and commissioned a pendant View of Oxford from the Abingdon Road (private collection).

Both were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1812. When, in the 1830s, Turner was choosing views of Oxford for his greatest series of watercolours, he rejected the High Street. He felt that, in the painting of 1810, he had achieved an unparalleled view of technical mastery that he could not repeat.

PROJECT EVALUATION OVERVIEW

SNAPSHOT EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Three snapshot evaluations took place over the spring and summer of 2016. Sessions were offered via standalone workshops that were based at the Museum.

Schools – Take One Turner Session

- Windmill Primary School – Year 3 class group.
- Twenty-eight students attended the session. This school's session was the second of two class groups to have had attended workshops that day.
- The session was led by one Museum Educator, was supported by the school's class teacher and two of the school's teaching assistants.

Families – Pop Up Session

- Two drop-in sessions were held during the school summer holidays.
- For one of these sessions, 36 parents and 44 children were observed to have attended.
- The session was designed and led by an artist, Amanda Beck, who was supported by five museum volunteers and one other member of museum education staff.

Adults – Gallery lecture

- Offered to the Faringdon U3A - Ashmolean Museum Special Interest Group
- Eighteen members attended the session
- The tour was led by a member of the Gallery Lecturer team



Take One...Turner taught gallery session with Windmill Primary School

IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Two projects were selected for 'in-depth' evaluation. These projects forged links with the CRISIS Skylight Centre (a national homelessness charity located at the Old Fire Station) and students from the Oxford Spire Academy

Initial hopes were that these projects would foster engagement with new audiences; Improve confidence in visiting museums and accessing their services; facilitate learning and well-being, and provide a contextually relevant way of exploring art - in light of the painting's local scene.

Community/ Schools I Can Make collaboration

- Oxford Spire Academy – Year 9 class, plus Sixth Formers who ran a project blog
- Considered a 'Widening Participation School' by the Oxford University Museums' body.
- Thirteen students were enrolled onto the project. 4 Sixth Formers attended sessions to document the s
- A total of 7 two-hour workshops delivered
- Two sessions took place at the school, and five others were held at the museum or around the city.
- At each session, students were accompanied by one of their school's class teachers (from art and design backgrounds), two Museum Educators and an externally employed subject specialist. For the first six weeks, the specialist post was held by Chris Thorpe of 'I Can Make,' the final session was led by a conceptual artist, Jon Lockhart.
- 12 students achieved a Bronze level Discover Arts Award

Community – CRISIS collaboration 'Piercing the Sky.'

- Through a collaboration with the Old Fire Station Centre in Oxford, project links were forged with the registered homeless charity 'CRISIS.'
- Seventeen members in total were involved throughout the whole project, with nine attending '*well or consistently*' (Lucy, Procter, CRISIS Art Tutor)
- The project was led by Jon Lockhart whose employment was external to both the Ashmolean and the CRISIS Following; his lead was supported by the Old Fire Station's Art Tutor, Lucy Procter.
- Throughout the activity programme, there were a number of external employments which involved poets, sound artists, museum staff and the Curator of the Ashmolean Museum.
- Sessions were typically based in the Arts Room at the Old Fire Station although members were also invited on a range of excursions throughout the city.
- Over twelve weeks members were asked to create two exhibition installations which would feature at the Old Fire Station Gallery and the Ashmolean Museum.

INTERPRETING THE PAINTING

The painting was used to inspire a number of activities, tailored to meet the needs and interests of a range of audiences. Activities were developed and delivered by a rich array of staff including eight museum education officers, two education session staff, four artists and two external specialists.



Then and now collages of the High Street produced at family drop in workshops led by artist Francesca Shakespeare

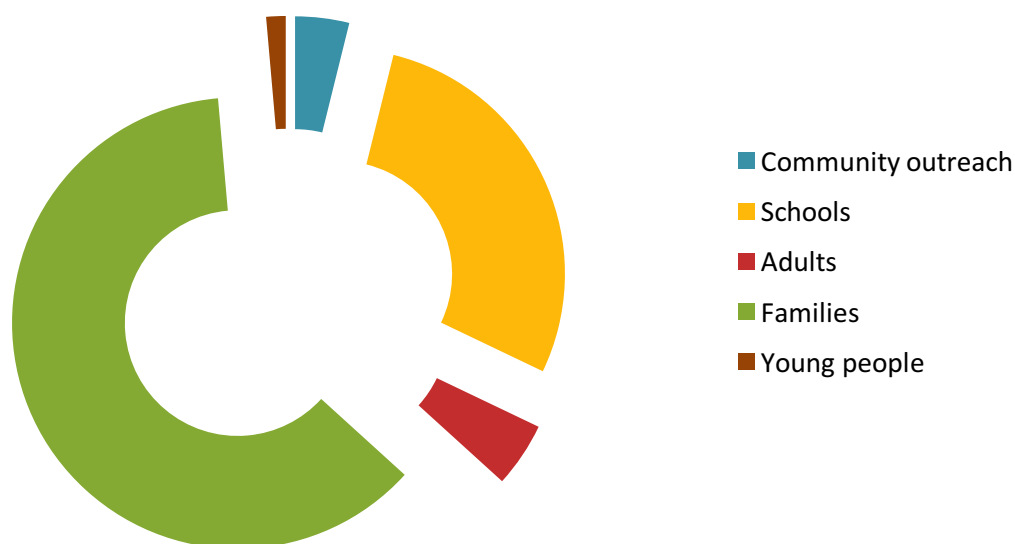
The painting's local subject matter allowed comparisons between then and now, and this was a central theme to the majority of activities. However, a number of other recurring themes were evident too:

- **The local context:** An image of the local High Street with a manipulated perspective. Activity programme groups were able to visit the site of the painting which gave a real appreciation for how much the street's perspective had been changed.
- **A snapshot in time:** Providing a comparison between then (1810) and now (2016). Craft and sound work activities explored distinctions between time periods.
- **A commissioned piece:** Visitors were given insight into the origins of the painting, commissioned by a local shopkeeper, James Wyatt, for one hundred guineas.
- **The style of painting:** Unique in Turner's output and the history of English art, the painting was rejected by the artist as one of his greatest works; Turner felt he would never be able to replicate the technical mastery evident within the painting.
- **Use of perspective:** Manipulated perspectives and details added in 'for the sake of colour,' interesting facts for anyone appreciating the local scene.
- **Through fashion:** A number of people going about their daily lives have been included in the painting, these figures (men, woman, and children) are dressed in clothing of the period. Activities at children and family workshops allowed children to dress up as characters and participate in role-play activities.
- **Through architecture:** Materially the architecture of the street has changed little since the commission of the painting. The 'I Can Make' group of secondary school students explored the streets architecture while learning about Computer Aided Design and the capabilities of 3D printers. The CRISIS group noted the architectural features and the compartmentalization of the city's buildings from St. Mary's University Church Spire.
- **Through links with the University:** A cluster of university scholars feature in the forefront of the painting, on the street lined with University College buildings. Links with university traditions, including a visit to a college, provided stimulating conversations for Year 9 and 12 students who were beginning to think about their career paths and future study.
- **A person and an artist:** Turner was familiar with the city and frequently visited relations five miles south-west of Oxford during his childhood. He painted over thirty watercolours of Oxford, the greatest devotion to a single place in his entire output.
- **Through beliefs and value:** Turner has been acknowledged as one of the greatest landscape artists of all time. Turner's portrait will be celebrated on the next reprint of the £20 note.
- **Through stories and conversations:** The painting is one of the most fully documented of all of Turner's pieces as the commissioner kept all correspondence between himself and the artist. Adult and community groups discussed people who had influenced Turner's work and his positioning amongst contemporaries.

ACTION AND EXPERIENCE: THE BREADTH AND DEPTH OF THE PROJECTS

Approximately 1250 people engaged with the Turner painting via HLF supported workshops and activities. Figure 1 demonstrates the uptake of various services by demographic. While the figure highlights the significant proportion attending schools and families workshops consideration must also be given to *how* each of these groups is accessing services, the depth of the engagement (with the museum and sessional content) and audiences' perceptions of the service received.

Figure. 1. Engagement with HLF activity



PROVISION FOR FAMILIES	BREADTH OF ENGAGEMENT	DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT
<p>During the evaluative period, families had the opportunity to attend two different Turner related workshops and also to access the pilot testing of an interactive project which encouraged a playful exploration of the painting via art activities and a new museum trial. The designated workshop sessions were 'Noisy Collage' (April 2016) and the 'Turner Pop Up' (July 2016), throughout children and their families could immerse themselves in a range of individuals and collaborative artwork projects.</p>	<p>One family workshop was observed for the evaluation. While the session was readily advertised many families commented that they had not planned their visit to the museum but that their participation in the session was more 'happen chance.' The session was considered a welcome time filler, very much appreciated during the summer holiday period.</p>	<p>Twenty-one percent of families in the observed 'Turner Pop Up' session had not used this style of museum service before; Eighty-six percent reported that they intended to use family sessions in the future.</p> <p>Within the session there were a number of grandparents who had found themselves responsible for childcare during the summer holidays; they were especially appreciative of the activities that the managed environment offered.</p> <p>There was a consensus that the creative and informal activities had made learning fun. Novel opportunities were considered to have facilitated discussions between children and families. Families praised the free-flow environment that had been created.</p>

PROVISION FOR SCHOOLS	BREADTH OF ENGAGEMENT	DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT
<p>Approximately three hundred and sixty-five students experienced the museum's Take One Turner sessions. These taught gallery sessions (for KS1 and KS2 students) utilised the painting as a spring board for cross-curricular learning. Due to the reputation and positive experiences working with the museum many local schools repeatedly access museum activities, said to provide their children with a chance to engage with 'real life art' and increase a familiarity with the museum.</p>	<p>While seven school groups were able to participate in the taught lecture, many others were able to access online materials that have been provisioned by the museum. Museum collected statistics detail 741 downloads of 'Take One Turner Notes' by primary school teachers from September 2015 – Sept 2016, and 131 downloads of 'Focus and Perspective Notes' for secondary schools since Feb 2016 – Sept 2016.</p>	<p>During the observed Take One session, students were welcomed on a journey to explore the painting and the museum. Drawing on different aspects of museum collections, students learned about fashion, art techniques, history, university traditions and knowledge of the local area.</p> <p>Seventy-one percent of surveyed students reported a desire to return and fifty-seven per cent wished to learn more about the subject.</p> <p>The primary school class teacher was thankful for the engaging session but suggested that more could have been done to support lower attaining pupils.</p>

PROVISION FOR ADULTS	BREADTH OF ENGAGEMENT	DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT
<p>Excluding community outreach projects approximately sixty adults attended five very different style museum based sessions, all of which were supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. These sessions were advertised in the 'What's On' programme and were also offered to adults with specific learning difficulties, through Oxfordshire Adult Learning Service, Abingdon & Witney College.</p>	<p>Adult sessions were designed to support the visually impaired (15 attendees); those requiring a sign language interpreted tour (10 attendees) and attendees with specific learning difficulties (7 attendees). In addition to these more specialised workshops, there was also a sketchbook course led by Amanda Beck (10 attendees) a gallery tour on 19th Century Art led by a member of the Gallery Lecturer team (18 attendees).</p>	<p>While some the sessions, were standalone and lecture based, the group of seven adults with learning difficulties were offered the opportunity to participate in a three-week programme during which they learned about Turner, his style and techniques and other artworks. Knowledge was used to inform individual recreations of the painting, and upon completion of the course, members achieved an ASDAN qualification.</p> <p>Only one adults' session was observed, those in attendance reported their 'frustration' at the length of the sessions – this was due to their love of learning and engagement with the topic.</p>

PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE	BREADTH OF ENGAGEMENT	DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT
<p>Over the evaluation period, there was one activity programme specifically designed to engage young people with the Museum. This project provided students with the opportunity to learn about the painting through traditional methods and also using a range of digital technologies, which they would use to document and manipulate various aspects of the painting.</p>	<p>This programme ran over six weeks and drew in members from the one of the Ashmolean Museum's 'Widening Participation Schools.' While the target group was fourteen Year 9 students, four additional sixth form students became involved in the project as project bloggers.</p>	<p>Across the duration of the course, students were able to engage with the painting via some avenues. They met and posed questions to the museum's Curator, visited the Museum's Print Room and walked the High Street as part of a comparative study of the painting. Students were granted access to The Queen's College (a university college on the High Street) and were introduced to a number of digital technologies. Students also received presentations about digital media and had the opportunity to see a 3D printer in action, as well as to work with an artist.</p> <p>Upon completion of the course, 12 students achieved their Discover Arts Award.</p>

PROVISION FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS	BREADTH OF ENGAGEMENT	DEPTH OF ENGAGEMENT
<p>Alongside two community exhibitions, the museum also ran three community outreach projects. These workshops allowed experimentation with a range of techniques and approaches and drew individual experiences to inform two of the community arts based projects.</p>	<p>The community outreach programmes all involved collaboration with services in the local community. Those able to participate in the community programs had learning disabilities/autism (5 adults); were vulnerable to homelessness (9 regular attendees) and or were attending care homes and days centres in Oxfordshire (46 adults).</p>	<p>The community outreach programs were all very different in their design and implementation. All community groups produced art works, for some this, was led by their experimentation with conventions and techniques (My Oxford – adult with learning disabilities); for others memories of Oxford-inspired creativity (I love the High Street – community reminiscence sessions).</p> <p>One community project was observed as part of the evaluation. The CRISIS homeless charity engaged with the painting on a 'shared journey' which ultimately required the group to create two exhibition pieces as part of a national event called Art in Crisis.</p>

THE DIFFERENCE MADE IN TERMS OF HERITAGE

FAMILIES: While ninety-six percent of parents attending the session felt it was important (44%) or very important (52%) for children to learn about heritage, not *all* agreed that this was a priority to be incorporated into family sessions. One parent commented that heritage learning activities seemed less appropriate for the very young but, that with age, such knowledge should be introduced. The local scene, evident within the painting, was '*not necessarily*' considered to have made the session seem any more relevant to parents or children. This said, for one family the heritage links held particular importance:

'As we are newcomers to Oxford (I'm Polish) we want our children to feel strong, emotional links with their community and the city's history' (Parent, family session).

SCHOOLS: During the observed school's session, the Year 3 group of children from Windmill Primary School had the opportunity to weave their way through a number of artefacts in the museum's collection. The Museum Educator seamlessly linked learning between objects and made the experience a journey that the children were all excited to participate. The group learned about the history of numerous artefacts which, thanks to the interlinking themes located each of them within context. The group reported having learned about art (86%), history (57%), Oxford (54%), how to work in a group (29%) and how to do new things (25%). Many of the activities had tasks which linked learning back to the local scene and therefore to the heritage of the students' local city.

ADULTS This group had an existing and detailed knowledge of their local city, but the session was able to offer supplementary understandings to influences evident with Turner's High Street. The group had been particularly interested in the effect that Thomas Molton had had upon the artist, and the '*need to balance mathematical theory of perspective with the evidence of the eye.*' This characteristic style is especially evident in the painting of the Oxford High Street. The group also learned about the manipulation of the local scene; they commented, that as a consequence of attending the session, that they will now view the local scene through new eyes.

YOUNG PEOPLE: Students attending the I Can Make activity programme were able to explore the history and the context of the painting at the museum and via a site visit to the local scene. During the visit to the High Street, students captured pictures of architecture and made comparisons between 'then and now.' On their visit, students were able to access one of the local colleges, further linking student experiences to the traditions of Oxford and its university heritage. Pre and post student survey data revealed that after having completed the course, students felt marginally '*more connected the history of Oxford and aware of links with the universities.*'

COMMUNITY GROUPS: For community groups, the most notable difference made regarding heritage was the links forged with the community, as in their organisation the bridging of many different organisations was required. In the case, if the 'Piercing the Sky' activity programme (which worked with the CRISIS homeless charity), members were welcomed into a 'culture' different from their current circumstance. The significance of this leap was well received, not only by activity programme participants but also by the museum's Curator and tour group attendees; The 'Piercing the Sky' group were thanked for their engagement with the museum service and the work that they had created which, for a time, was installed at the Old Fire Station and also at the Ashmolean Museum.

Attendees from all workshops reported that the museum facilitated access to knowledge and resources; for some groups novel and creative experiences were also incorporated. Perceived expectations of the community outreach project (Piercing the Sky), were less lucid reflecting the ‘organic, creative process’ which in its design was intended to be led by group members.

In Figure 2, a brief summary of individual project outcomes has been depicted.

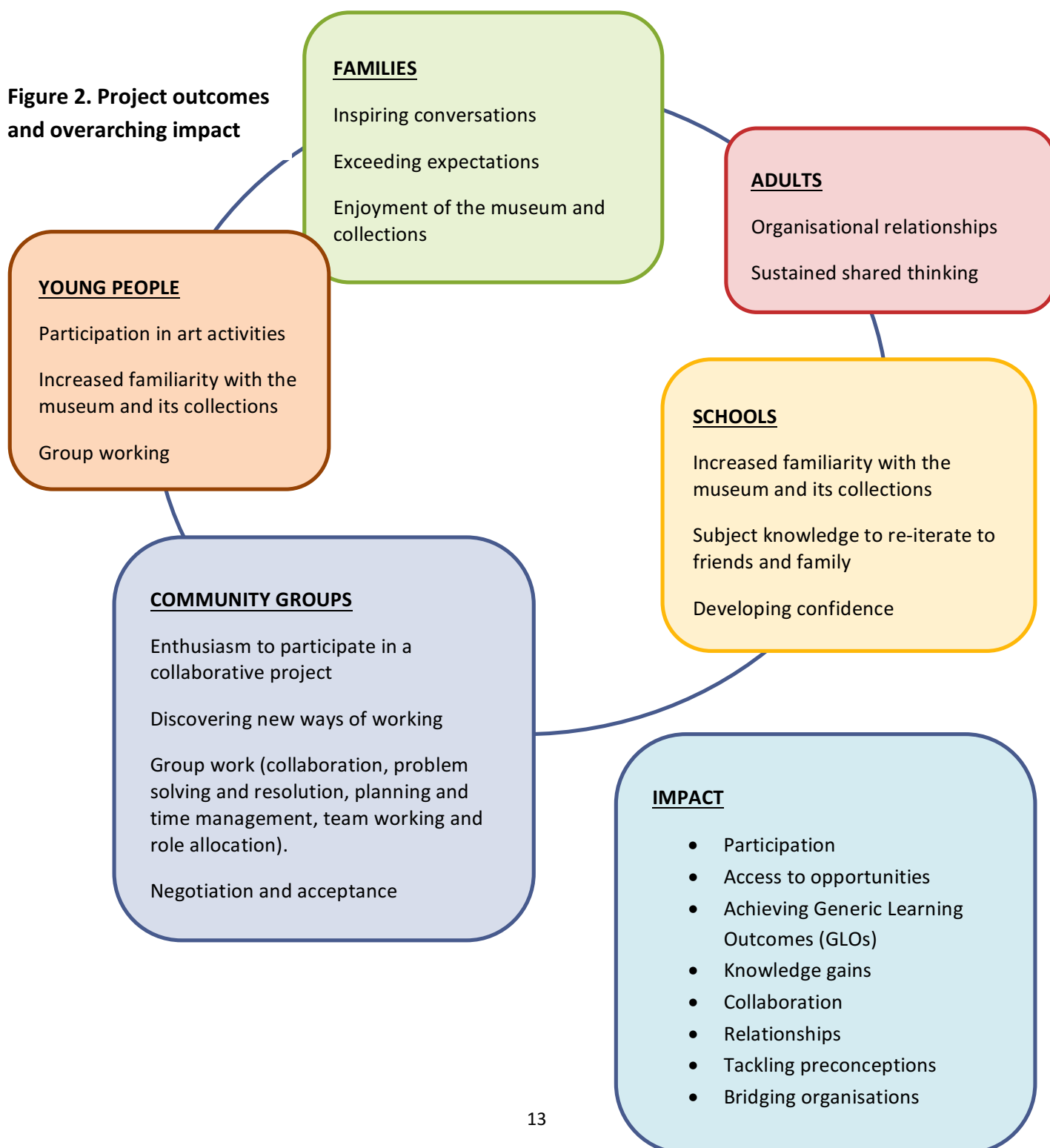


Figure 3. Family feedback linked to GLOs

I think these craft sessions work really well when they are linked clearly to the original pieces in the museum so the children can learn and appreciate it beyond just a craft session. The printed summary on the table was useful (Parent, Family Drop-In Session)

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Families opted to attend the workshop due to its educational value and links to local heritage.
- While the painting’s local scene did *‘not necessarily’* make the session more relevant to children and families, families were appreciative of how staff had linked craft based activities to museum artifacts.

ENJOYMENT, INSPIRATION, AND CREATIVITY

- During the session, parents reported their thankfulness for the service and their enjoyment of having *‘tried out something new.’*
- Parents immersed themselves in colouring activities as their children enjoyed the free-flow creative environment.
- The novel focus of the session was said to have provided interesting material for parent-child conversations.

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

- Children were welcomed to participate in activities which promoted both fine and gross motor skills.
- The social circumstance of the session facilitated interactions with children outside the classroom context, as well as giving children opportunities to interact with unfamiliar adults.
- Through their participation and on-going training volunteers were able to develop transferable knowledge and skills.

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

- For a number of families their happen chance attendance at the drop in workshop was the first time they had accessed this style of museum service.
- Male engagement with family provision is an area which the museum may wish to investigate in more detail.

Sessions like this offer....

- *Chance to take part in an activity with a group of children not only from the school that he attends – he enjoys watching other children and adults – eventually became more confident to go to staff without adult help* (Parent, Family Drop-In Session)
- *Creativity, making learning fun* (Parent, Family Drop-In Session)
- *Something different. Good discussion with my 7 year old about Turner and other painters* (Parent, Family Drop-In Session)

CHANGE IN ACTIVITY, BEHAVIOUR, PROGRESSION

- Eighty-six per cent of families reported that they would use museum services in the future.

Figure 4. School feedback linked to GLOs

Learning in the museum is: *'good because you learn stuff'* (Year 3 student, Primary School Session)

Learning in the museum is *'fun by dressing up'* (Year 3 student, Primary School Session)

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- A range of interlinked and cross-curricular themes were evident throughout the session.

- The fun and engaging nature of the museum educator maintained children's focus by leading them through the collections on a scaffolded learning journey.

- 86% of students suggested that they had learned about art, 57% had learned about history, and 54% reported having learned something new about Oxford.

ENJOYMENT, INSPIRATION, AND CREATIVITY

- Museum staff invited children to participate in a range of interactive activities and supported them through tasks with an encouraging, supporting and praising nature.

- The inclusion of props within the school's workshop session created great excitement within the class, all children were keen to have a 'hands-on' experience.

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

- During the sessions, students were required to work in small groups. In reflective feedback 29% of students suggested that the session had taught them how to work in groups.

- Students reported gains in subject knowledge and also suggested that they had learnt 'how to do new things' (25%).

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

- The session provided an opportunity for children to explore the museum and get up close and personal with items from the collections.

- Role play activities required children to act out the day to day lives of the painting's characters.

Sessions like this offer....

- *An opportunity to see 'real life' painting and hear information from real experts* (Year 3, class teacher).
- *Expert knowledge and access to real artefacts* (Year 3, class teacher).
- *Knowledge growth and enjoyment* (Year 3, class teacher).

CHANGE IN ACTIVITY, BEHAVIOUR, PROGRESSION

- Seventy-one per cent of children suggested that they would like to return to the museum as they had found their learning enjoyable.

- Children were equipped with a collage activity to complete at home or in school.

Figure 5. Adult feedback linked to GLOs

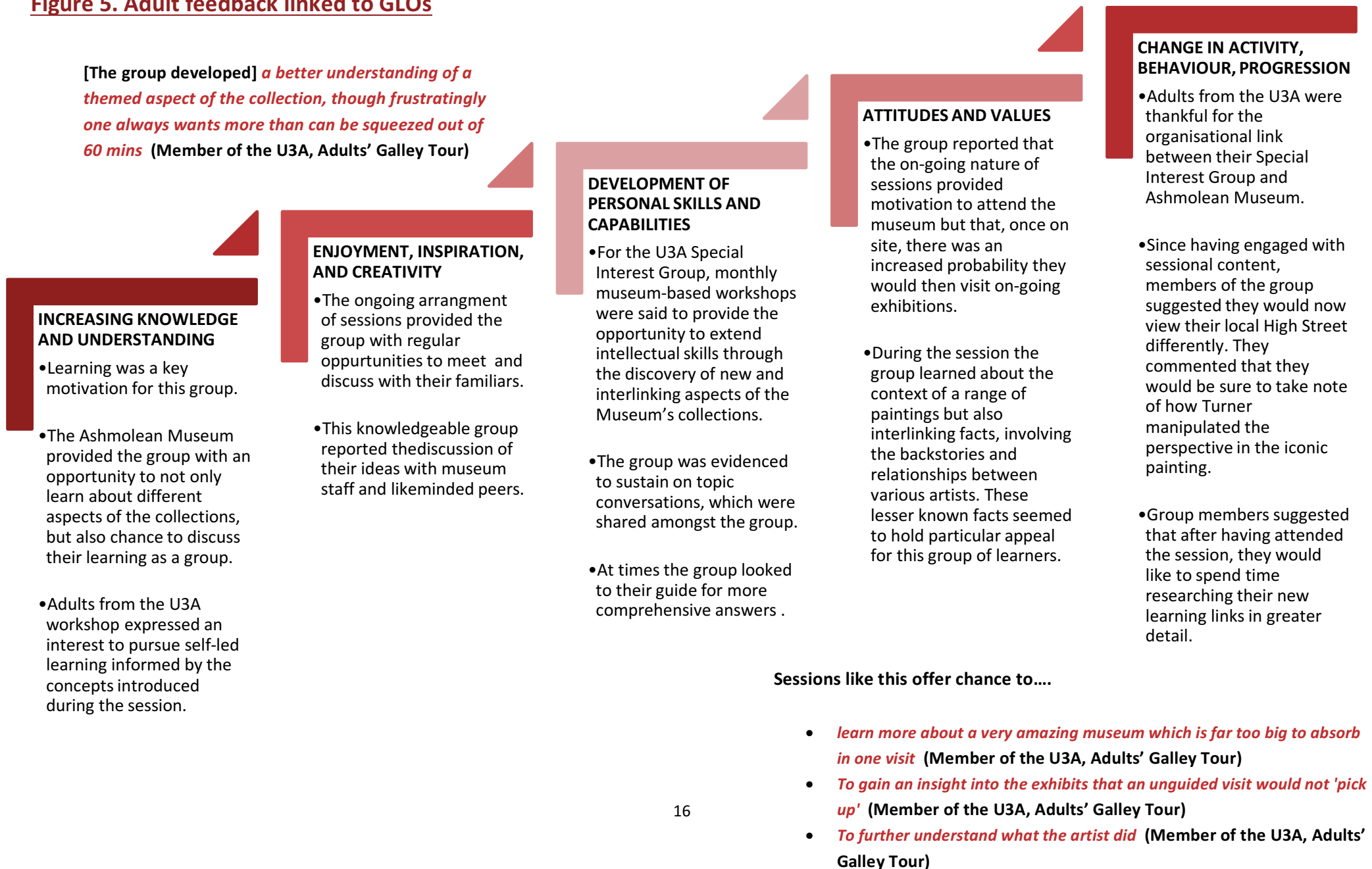


Figure 6. Young peoples' feedback linked to GLOs

[These sessions] *give a context to their work in school, and makes that more successful too – and more broadly, as they shared their work with other students on their return* (Head of Sixth Form, Oxford Spires Academy).

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- Content was introduced through a range of presentations which depicted applications of digital technology
- Students were able to see digital hardware in action (cameras and a 3D printer).
- Students were invited to experience with a range of digital software applications which were used to document aspects of the Museum's collections.

ENJOYMENT, INSPIRATION, AND CREATIVITY

- Students were presented with many creative opportunities (of craft and digital natures), which enabled them to incorporate session based learning into personalised works of art.
- Over the duration of the course, group observations revealed a developing familiarity and emergent friendships within the class group.

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

- Those who had attended the 'I Can Make' programme reported having learnt: how to work in a group (19%) and life skills (6%).
- While these numbers appear low, class teachers felt that students had gained much more from the experience, particularly that as a consequence of the museum led arrangements students' had developed communication and team working skills.
- The four Sixth Form students who had been involved in the project also gained experience running and writing a project blog (using Word Press software).

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

- Teaching staff commented that the Museum's invitation to participate had made the Year 9 class group feel *'special'* and that their inclusion in this style of activity programme had boosted their confidence, as well as skills and understandings of art.
- Students learnt about career possibilities in creative industries and also in museum services.
- For the Sixth Form students, who had been blogging about the project, the experience was considered particularly helpful regarding attitudes towards future careers.

I have learnt....

- *How to think outside of the box* (Year 9 student)
- *Things about Turner, changes of the High Street, how to work better in a team* (Year 9 student)
- *About 3D printing and how it works* (Year 9 student)

CHANGE IN ACTIVITY, BEHAVIOUR, PROGRESSION

- The journey presented students with many creative and digital artwork opportunities.
- Twelve students achieved their Bronze Arts Award
- Pre and post survey data revealed that since having attended the course students were more likely to suggest that they *'enjoy working as part of a team of a group.'*
- The course brought together 13 students from the same school year, bonds were observed to have developed over the duration of the course.
- The group of Sixth Form students continue to now have a collaborative piece of work published online, which remains accessible through the Ashmolean Museum's web pages.

Figure 7. Community feedback linked to GLOs

The programme opened doors to a group who do not typically think of museums as being 'for them' (Director of CRISIS).

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- The group received instruction and guidance from externally employed artists, art tutors, poets and sound engineers.; these staff welcomed group discussion and supported learning through 'sense-making.'
- The group also worked with various members of museum staff, including the Museum's Curator, Deputy Head of Education, Community Education Officer and the Volunteers and Outreach Officer, who offered their knowledge and insight into the painting.
- Group discussions informed the direction of the project which bridged understandings and introduced conceptual relationships.

ENJOYMENT, INSPIRATION, AND CREATIVITY

- Throughout the project members were presented with a range of experiences to inspire their choice of creative direction.
- Sustained attendance evidenced the groups' enjoyment of planned activities; which spanned from sharing cake during the first week to the development of artwork inspired by sound.
- Members reported their enjoyment of being able to host personalised museum tours, citing that this experience allowed them to come into a world of their own.

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

- For this group of vulnerable people, the development of life skills and associated confidences are considered key in their transitional journey.
- The Arts Tutor and Director of the Old Fire Station reported that over the duration of the course group members had learned how to: problem solve, work in a group, have confidence in their own ideas and understand the importance of regular attendance.
- Staff considered developed competencies beneficial as practical and day-to-day skills which will aid transitions into the work place and/or shared living accommodation.

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

- Experiences afforded by the project are thought to have benefited self-esteem and negotiation of group work tasks.
- Working towards the exhibition allowed the group to experience 'being other', understanding themselves as capable artists rather than vulnerable individuals.
- Three group members led tours around the Ashmolean Museum, presenting their knowledge to members of the general public. Feedback detailed thankfulness for the personal perspectives of group members.

What we are trying to do is enable people to choose their own labels, you might work in through that front door with a big fat label on your head saying homeless problem, service user, poor miserable, need help. But what our hope is that whilst they are here they can just tear up that label and re-write it. They can write, volunteer, contributor, audience, public. Or they can write artist and actually it will be truth (Director of CRISIS).

CHANGE IN ACTIVITY, BEHAVIOUR, PROGRESSION

- Group members learnt to recognize themselves as competent and talented individuals, capable of exhibiting work in two different exhibition spaces.
- Cohesion developed between regular attendees who managed their individual projects whilst also functioning as *'one team with one goal.'*
- Upon completion of the project, staff and members of the public thanked the the group for their efforts, praised their intellectual insights and commented on how their confidence had prospered.

Input	Sustaining learning for the future
Enthusiastic and supportive staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff appeared very enthusiastic and engaging; Groups were all thankful for their contributions. • The complementary experiences of staff and their collaborative ways of working are a credit to the museum. • Volunteer time should be used effectively and adapted in consideration of group work activities.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across programmes the clear focus on the Turner painting was evident. Later works and links to his life were introduced to all groups. • Evidence of both targeted and freestyle approaches were observed. • Sessions catered well for the broad demographic that they served. However, attendees from both the schools and adult groups suggested that further consideration could be given to the specific needs of their learners - whether high or low achieving. • Family groups, in particular, enjoyed the linking of craft activities and to their experience of museum learning. • Where possible adapt 'partner aims' into the planning process.
Catering for unpredictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff were well able to adapt to the needs and characteristics of each of their groups. • School staff should be made aware of their responsibilities to support the session. • Transport issues affected two of the observed sessions. For one, staff were able to adapt the session content and offer children a take home activity, however, for the other the lack of transport availability dramatically affected attendance.
The quality of provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically the quality of provision and resources on offer was fantastic. • Those attending activity programmes were provided with personal keepsakes such as post cards and sketchbooks. • Staff were competent and engaging. In their own styles, they were able to offer and discuss information about many aspects of the painting. • Information was presented clearly and succinctly to all groups. • Quality should be maintained across all sessions and workshops.
Group dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All groups reported feeling inspired and suggested a desire to learn more. • Staff successfully encouraged groups to share and discuss their ideas. • Over the course of the two in-depth evaluations, it was evident how individuals within these groups began to form bonds with one another. • All groups could be encouraged to explore wider museum collections independently.
Community collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to link the characteristics of external collaborators to the most suited community projects. • Continue to draw upon staff and collaborators known for their successful reputation. • Acknowledge the bi-directional benefits of working with smaller agency organisations.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

In this evaluative study, a sample of accounts have been brought together from individuals and organisations, currently accessing the museum and its services, while these projects represent the breath of group engaging with The Ashmolean Museum; it is acknowledged that the work of the Education Team extends well beyond the remit of this evaluation. For a full overview of the project activity, please refer to Appendix C.

All groups learnt a wealth of information about the painting and its context; for some, experiences afforded site visits and/or meeting with a variety of museum staff who were each able to offer insights into the painting. Staff eloquently described the scene, commission and the significance of the acquisition. In particular, visitors reported having found the 'back story' of the artist and the painting of great interest. This type of informed learning is usually less accessible to independent explorers of the museum but was reported as an influence on the learning experiences of all groups.

Coordinators from external organisations were pleased with the service that they received and expressed a desire to continue working with The Ashmolean Museum. As detailed in the Appendix (sections A and B), feedback from external coordinators detailed how engagement with the museum had supported the development of soft skills and also brought profile and resource to smaller community projects.

Groups were appreciative of the distinct learning links made between craft activities and museum artefacts and sessional experiences were cited by all groups as having inspired conversations and furthered curiosity. Feedback from parents and coordinators who had attended family, young persons and community group sessions all referenced participants development of confidence, group work skills and benefits to self-esteem.

Recommendations for each of the specific activity programmes can be found within the Appendix. However, a number of over-arching recommendations are also notable:

Staffing

- Ensure external staff are aware of their responsibilities to support the session.
- Consider the most efficient use of staff and volunteer time. Staff numbers should be modified in light of the activity requirements.
- Continue to draw upon staff and collaborators known for their successful reputation.
- Continue to link the characteristics of external collaborators to the most suited community projects.

Activity planning

- Make all activities available throughout the duration of session (ensuring fair access throughout drop-in sessions)
- Have a range of pre-prepared activities for those on the outskirts of recommended age ranges/ or who quickly complete activities
- While physical locations are considered during planning, where possible consideration should also be given to environmental distractions (i.e. noise from building works)
- Within sessions, attendees could be provided with resources which would encourage them to explore the wider museum i.e. treasure trails, info on linked learning.

- During project planning discuss backup strategies and who is responsible for changes made to the programme structure.
- Ensure that there is an interactive element to learning presentations.

Understanding attendees

- Allow time for an informal discussion at the start of the session - to understand the groups existing knowledge and required level of content.
- Adapt to the characteristics of attendees (i.e. distractibility, ability to sit still, etc...)
- Where necessary ensure that transport arrangements are in place for each session

Outreach work

- Continue 'widening participation' and engage those less likely to access museum services.
- Use the credibility of the museum to tackle pre-conceptions of marginalised groups.
- Build on the bi-directional benefits of working with smaller agency organisations.

While it was not within the remit of the evaluation to explore each of these areas the museum may wish to conduct future research into: a) male engagement during family sessions; b) hosting community group sessions later in the day/ during the evening; c) 'less academic' and more 'accessible' museum based tours.

SCHOOLS – ‘TAKE ONE’ TURNER SESSION

The planning and considerations involved in the organisation of the primary school session were discussed in an interview with Clare Coleman, the Ashmolean Museum's co-coordinator for Early Years and Key Stage 2, who spoke highly about the strengths and flexibility of the staff within her team. She also referred to recent changes that had been taking place around the museum, which included a number of gallery re-hangs. The Turner painting had moved to three different locations throughout the duration of the planning for primary school's session, two of these moves had affected the space available for primary school visits. Claire discussed how the location of paintings/objects around the museum is of great importance when activity planning as the positioning of items affects how groups can use the space (whether to move around or sit comfortably) within sightline of the focal piece. While outreach work to support the painting has taken place, it was felt that with this particular piece *'it's good just to come in and see the real thing, to be in the gallery spaces and so on.'*

In the initial acquisition, bid proposed that the painting would be used to support cross-curricular learning (introducing students to a different period, the architecture, fashion, art, etc...). While these cross-curricular links were apparent from observations, Claire also felt that it was the job of the museum staff to make the content fun and engaging.

For this particular schools session with the Year 3 students from Windmill Primary, 28 students were in attendance along with their class teacher and two of the school's support staff. This class group was the second to take part in a session on this day

Windmill Primary School – Year 3 class group

Partner aim:

- To provide students with *'an opportunity to see real-life paintings and hear information from the experts'* (Hannah Kurland, Year 3 class teacher)

Focus on the painting

- Students were required to draw on their knowledge of the local scene and identify differences between the time periods of then (1810) and now (2016) this comparison informed a range of activities.
- The period context was introduced to students through discussions about fashion and the University.

Activity

- Collections in the Textiles Gallery and Gallery space offered contextual learning.
- Themed dressing up and role play activities.
- Comparisons between 'then and now' supported discussions of architecture and a creative sound work activity.
- Students were asked to chronologically order a series of paintings and photographs which documented the High Street over time.
- A collage activity.



INPUTS

- ***A talented and knowledgeable Session Leader***
- ***'Freedom' to explore the museum collections***
- ***Dressing up box***
- ***Replica models of museum artifacts***
- ***Dated pictures and photographs***
- ***Collage materials***

The school's session was led by Kate an Education Session Leader who had worked at the museum for over three years. Throughout the session observation, Kate demonstrated enthusiasm, high energy, and great delivery and this was very apparent throughout the session observation. Kate used appropriate questioning to explore the group's subject knowledge; she elaborated on their understandings and where necessary probed responses to encourage a deeper engagement.

Throughout the session, the group weaved through various parts of the museum. The session began in the Education Centre, which worked as a meeting place and an area for children to have their lunch. The group then moved through the galleries and settled in the Textiles Gallery where they discussed a range of objects on display. After this

Kate suggested that the group continue their '*big journey to find a special painting*'; the group then moved upstairs to the 19th Century Gallery where they gathered in front of the Turner painting.

Kate was prepared with a dressing up box and also a replica model of one of the display case items. This provisioning gave children a real 'hands on' experience and an excitement to be involved with the collections. Coming prepared with the replica models worked well as when children were grouped in the Textiles gallery not all were able to view directly into the display case.

The area had very low lighting, and building works had created a distracting background noise. Due to disruption amongst students, at this time, class teachers became very determined to keep students '*sitting on their bums*' in an attempt to support the session.

Upon reaching the 19th Century Art Gallery, Kate used more props from the dressing up box to facilitate a discussion about the characters in the painting. Afterwards, a time sequencing task was introduced to the group where students were required to chronologically order a series of paintings and photographs (also of the Oxford High Street).

There was an intention to complete a collage activity during the session; unfortunately, as students arrived late (due to transport issues) there was not enough time to complete this activity. Instructions were however explained to the class teacher, and each child was given a mini collage pack to take home.



OUTPUTS

- ***Enjoyment of the session***
- ***Collage figurines*** (intended)
- ***Developed subject knowledge***

Children's enjoyment was evident throughout the taught session. Whenever children were offered the chance to participate, hands shot up across the room. Classmates thoroughly enjoy watching their peers participate in role play activities. When asked questions children offered thought-out and entertaining answers; they also asked questions to Kate demonstrating an engagement with the taught content. Children enjoyed the tactile aspect of having props; however, excitement to get hold of items sometimes agitated members of the group.

While direct knowledge gains across the session cannot be accounted for, children were introduced to a range of interlinked topics which gave insight into the context of the painting. Children discussed fashion, art, history, university traditions and knowledge of the local area, with Kate and as a class group. During the discussion and supporting activities children were able to demonstrate group working skills.

OUTCOMES

- ***Increased familiarity with museum collections***
- ***Subject knowledge to re-iterate to family and friends***
- ***Developing confidence (dressing up and group work tasks)***

Throughout the session, children were provided with opportunities to engage with the museum collections in a variety of forms. Kate linked learning across objects almost as if telling a story to the children. She encouraged the group to hypothesize and reflect upon their responses and also inspired their use of imagination, asking how they may have done things differently if they had been in the artist's shoes. Children were encouraged to come back with the family and friends and share their developed subject knowledge.

During certain activities, children were required to volunteer and stand up in front of their class group; Some children appeared to be natural performers, whereas others seemed more hesitant. Kate was very encouraging and sensitive to each student's characteristics. After each activity, she praised her volunteers and asked the class group to give a round of applause. All children beamed as they returned to their seats.

IMPACTS

- ***On-going relationship between the museum and the school***
- ***Developing interest and engagement with museum collections***
- ***A desire to return***
- ***Curiosity for additional knowledge***

The school had visited the museum once before, earlier on in the year. They had been invited back to participate in a free workshop which their class teacher reflected: *'links wonderfully with our Great Britain topic.'* For the school, the museum provided a valuable opportunity to see a *'real life painting and hear information from the experts'*. The class teacher's main reason for attending to the museum based session was to facilitate knowledge growth through an enjoyable experience.



On return to school students completed a free-writing task. Fifty-eight percent of students used vocabulary which described museum learning as enjoyable, eighteen per cent of free-written descriptions reflected on content and knowledge gains: '[Museum learning is...] good because you learn stuff.'

As part of a tick box task students suggested they had learned about art (86%), history (57%), Oxford (54%), how to work in a group (29%) and how to do new things (25%). Survey results also suggested that children mainly enjoyed their museum experience, with seventy-one percent specifying a desire to return. Fifty-seven percent of children reported interest in learning more about the subject.

When asked if the class content had seemed appropriately matched to class group's ability the school's teacher, Hannah Kurland, suggested the content had been appropriate for most. On the whole, the session was to be considered '*very engaging*,' although the class teacher did note that more could have been done to support lower attaining learners.

STAFF

- ***Adaption***
- ***Assumed roles***

The class group was accompanied by members of the primary school's staff for the duration of the session; this worked well with this large group of students. During the session some children became excitable, their class teacher demonstrated a clapping technique which prompted students to be quiet and focus on the activity. Later in the session Kate successfully mimicked this technique and regained the attention of the class. Claire described how the assumed role of school class teachers can vary across sessions, creating a necessary flexibility from the Session Leader.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- High energy and engaging sessions keep students task focused.
- Continue strategies to support the depth of learning i.e. props and questioning
- Consider environmental distractions in addition to space allocation.
- Empower staff to manage the behaviours of visitors outside the class group (visitors must not photograph/disrupt tours).



FAMILIES – POP UP SESSION

The museum has an on-going commitment to making the museum more family friendly. Recent initiatives have sought to make family events a regular feature of the museum's activity timetable and the Museum is also keen to increase the profile of such events by maximising time spent within the gallery and atrium spaces.

This session was well attended and felt lively throughout. In total 36 parents and 44 children dropped into the session which was supported by a total of seven staff.

Open access drop-in session.

Partner aim:

- For families, the most popular reason for attending the workshop was *'getting out and about'* (60%), followed by *'educational value for my child'* (48%), and *'spending time together as a family'* (35%). Other lesser cited reasons included: *'the workshop sounded fun'* (32%) *making use of local services* (29%); and *'learning about Oxford heritage'* (26%).

Focus on the painting

- The painting was the predominant focus of the session. A range of creative activities drew directly on visible elements of the painting.

Activity

- Opportunities for colouring, cutting and sticking:
- 3D representation of Turner's High Street personalised with 'cobbles' that were decorated and signed by children and their families.
- Pop- up cards – using A4 sheets of card children could make figures 'stand up' within their depictions of the Oxford High Street.
- A dress up activity, which as an unintended consequence provided a costumed photo opportunity in the 3D High Street scene.
- Turner's High Street Family Activity which families could do in Gallery 67 by the painting



INPUTS

- ***Marketing***
- ***Tuner trolley***
- ***Dedicated space***
- ***Staff and volunteers***
- ***Materials and activity planning***

Publicised as one of the Ashmolean Museum's Family events, the session was advertised on the website and in the museum's 'What's On' guide and Family Friendly Flyer. With the same session replicated over two days, the session offered families the chance to *'Get to know the most famous painting of Oxford in the world! Then help us build a 3D version of the High Street'* (Ashmolean Museum's Family Fun leaflet, 2016). While all ages were welcome marketing advertised the session as most suitable for children aged 4-11years.

Children's tables, chairs, and resources ('Turner trolley' complete with 'build the High Street block activity, jigsaws, postcards, dress up, colouring and art books) had been arranged in the atrium. This staged area worked well as an advertisement to direct families into the main session. The main session was located in the museum's Education Centre. Having this space available meant that children were able to freely explore the room and circulate between the various activities.

The session was supported by five volunteers, one member of museum education staff and Amanda Beck, an artist who developed and led the Turner, summer 'pop up' sessions. Prior to the session Amanda was well known to the museum and had delivered a series of Turner inspired workshops earlier in the year, she had been appointed as a Session Leader and was now in charge of delivering services to schools and families.

Staff and volunteers created a friendly environment. They welcomed children and families into the room and were on hand to introduce the painting and supporting activities. Staff modeled enthusiasm, praise, and encouragement. Volunteers managed to tidy the room and re-stock the table materials throughout.

A range of activities were made available throughout the session. These included: colouring in the '3D High Street'; a pop-up card colouring activity (for children to take home) and a dress up activity which was introduced mid-way through the session.

'What we're trying to do is cater for a range of ages to make sure that there are things that even the really little ones can do and stuff that the parents might enjoy' (Helen Ward, Deputy Head of Education).

OUTPUTS

- ***Artworks to take home***
- ***Interest in follow-up activities***
- ***Opportunities to contribute to a group work project***
- ***Novel photo opportunities***

Each child who attended the session was involved in at least one activity. Many parents/guardians supported their children throughout. Children were welcome to take home the work that they had completed during the session. They were also welcome to take home additional paper handout activities.

Each child was also invited to contribute to the 3D representation of the High Street. Parents were also observed to enjoy this activity, with many happily doodling on the streets 'cobblestones' which would be later used to 'pave' the High Street representation.

Combined with the dressing up activity the 3D High Street provided a 'child size' backdrop for photographs. Parents used their phones to take photos of their children, but on request, volunteers were able to use museum iPads to capture pictures, which could then be emailed on to parents.



OUTCOMES

- ***Exceeding expectations of families***
- ***Enjoyment of museum collections***
- ***Inspiring parent-child conversations***

Families attending the session opted to come for a variety of reasons. Of these reasons, twenty-one per cent had come with the intention of 'trying something new.' It was possible to contrast this survey item against fifty-seven per cent of guardians reporting that they had 'enjoyed trying something new' after experiencing the session. This finding not only suggests that attendees had enjoyed the workshop but that they had also received more than originally anticipated.

Parents and guardians praised the freestyle environment facilitated throughout the session and also appreciated the conceptual 'bridges' between the session activities and museum collections. One parent commented:

'So important for children to learn about paintings and the artifacts in the museum, it is a very rich resource for us. There were squeals of delight when we found the original painting upstairs. I think these craft sessions work really well when they are linked clearly to the original pieces in the museum so the children can learn and appreciate it beyond just a craft session. The printed summary on the table was useful.'

A grandparent described how session content had given her new conversation material to discuss with her grandson. She had been amazed by her grandson's demonstration of 19th Century subject knowledge (which he had learned through the Horrible Histories book collections), and also his familiarity with Turner, which had been informed by a recent trip to the Turner Contemporary Museum in Margate.

IMPACTS

- ***Participation***
- ***Learning about heritage***
- ***Knowledge about the museum collections***

Parents and guardians reported that the family workshop offered a number of opportunities for children's participation. Descriptions associated with each of these opportunities highlighted the significance of the session's impact. Reasoning has been summarized below.

1. Creative activities made learning fun
2. Focal topics led (and will continue to lead) novel discussions
3. The social circumstance of the session facilitated interactions with children outside the classroom context, and also developed children's confidence to interact with unfamiliar adults
4. The engaging activities supported task focus
5. Group work activities provided the opportunity to *'be part of something larger'*, through collaboration with peers and the session artist to create a shared piece of work.

'These sessions are wonderful (I have bought my grandson to several sessions when visiting the area or looking after him in the school holidays, it focuses his attention in a way that I wouldn't be able to'
(Grandparent, family session)

While ninety-six percent of parents attending the session felt it was important (44%) or very important (52%) for children to learn about heritage not *all* agreed that this was a priority to be incorporated into family sessions. One parent commented that heritage learning activities seemed less appropriate for the very young, but that with age, such knowledge should be introduced. The local scene, evident within the painting, was *'not necessarily'* considered to have made the session seem any more relevant to parents or children. This said, for one family the heritage links held particular importance:

'As we are newcomers to Oxford (I'm Polish) we want our children to feel strong, emotional links with their community and the city's history' (Parent, family session)

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

One hundred percent of parents rated the staff and volunteers at the families session as *good* (34%) and *excellent* (66%).

'It works well when staff explain more about the activity to children and link it very clearly to the archives in the museum, so there is more learning than just a craft session' (Parent, family session)

The museum's volunteers are recruited through the joint museum service; they all receive training through an induction process and are thought of as advocates for the museum. The Joint Museums Group manages to rota and co-ordinate events across the city's museum to ensure that an adequate supply of volunteers is available when necessary.

'Volunteers play a key role in helping us to deliver a busy family learning programme that reaches approx. 9000 children and adults each year'... 'In 2015-6 the number of volunteer hours spent on Public Engagement activity at the Ashmolean was approx. 1600 hours' (Helen Ward, Deputy Head of Education).

While the figures represent a commitment by volunteers to support museum service, through the volunteer service, volunteers are also able to develop transferable knowledge and skills through ongoing training and mentoring opportunities.

On leaving the session many parents took time to thank session staff personally.

'I just want to tell you this is fantastic, keep doing what you are doing' (Parent, family session)

Research staff observations noted a high ratio of volunteers to families which at the time made their purpose redundant. While volunteers can gain experience through session participation, it is also important to make the best use of their time. Time management of volunteers must be considered in reflection of the museum's new direction towards less intense family sessions.

QUALITY

Ninety-seven percent of parents spoke highly about the quality of the event (45% *good* and 52% *excellent*). Parents said the activities were good and that in the short term the session provided *'peace'* but also that the craft nature of sessions inspires similar play at home.

Forty-three per cent of families rated the range of activities as *excellent*, forty-six per cent *good*, and eleven per cent *somewhat good*. In the light of parent and guardians main reasons for attending, one strategy to improve activity feedback may be to expand upon the educational content made available during the sessions. However, in light of the broad age range which the session aims to accommodate (4 – 11 years), the difficulties in planning are recognised.

Parents commented that although *'[the activities] are aimed at older children we enjoy them and doing the parts that we can'*; inevitably contrasted against *'Great for younger children, not so much for older ones'* – this particular family had attended with their two children, an 11-year-old boy, and 8-year-old girl.

GENDERED PREFERENCES

Gendered preferences of children emerged through discussions with parents.

'My granddaughter loves it, grandson not so much (8-year-old twins), but I suppose that's just because he is a boy, he loses focus much quicker'.

Observations revealed the sustained task focus of girls, while engaged in colouring activities, while boys were more likely to prioritise cutting and sticking activities. For this reason, when planning activity sessions, it may be useful to consider differences in task focus between boys and girls more closely. 27 girls and 17 boys attended the session.

Nine male adults accompanied children into the observed drop in session (compared to 27 female adult attendees). Where males had attended with their partners, they were most likely to leave the session and intermittently come back to check up on children and families. While this may reflect entrenched attitudes toward child care and parental responsibility the museum should consider ways to encourage and sustain male attendance throughout session activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider novel photo opportunities as a publicizing resources
- Have backup activities suitable for those of older age groups and/or those who complete activities at a faster pace than siblings.
- Manage staff (volunteers) in consideration of the session activity.
- Encourage male engagement eg consider gendered preferences for craft activities

ADULTS – GALLERY TOUR

The adult session was designed for and attended by the Faringdon U3A (University of the Third Age). The U3A is an organisation which offers retired and semi-retired people opportunities to come together and learn '*for the sheer love of learning*' (U3A website, 2016). Those attending the tour were all part of the Faringdon U3A's 'Ashmolean Museum Special Interest Group' who visit the museum once a month to receive lectures about different aspects of the collections. Each month an expert guide gives a talk about the focus area; this month's session was advertised as '*Turner's High Street and 19th Century Academic Paintings with Gabriella Blakey*' (U3A website, 2016).

Usually, adult session attendance is capped at 12 members but due to the regular attendance and relationship developed this particular group and the museum they have been welcomed to bring other members along. Group members ranged between 45 and 70 years; many group members had attended the session with their spouses. There were ten female and eight male attendees.

Partner aim:

- As part of the Ashmolean Museum special interest group, the most predominant reason for attending was typically:

'To learn more about a very amazing museum, this is far too big to absorb in one visit' (member of the Faringdon U3A)

- Learning was a key motivation for this group.

Focus on the painting

- The Turner painting was introduced to the group at the start of the tour, and various aspects were discussed, one other Turner painting was introduced to the group, and then the tour diverged to discuss the work of other 19th Century artists, including Constable, Leighton, Millais, Hunt, and Collins.

Activity

- The group received a gallery lecture on 19th Century art.
 - Focus on the Turner painting (life and times)
 - Introduction of other pieces (Constable, Leighton, Millais, Hunt, and Collins) and galleries (East Meets West).

INPUTS

- ***Passionate Gallery Lecturer***
- ***Headsets***
- ***Paper handouts***

Upon arrival the group gathered in the Randolph Gallery where they were met by Gabriella, she introduced herself and provided members of the group with headsets. The group then made their way up to the 19th Century Art Gallery. The tour had been portioned out to allow the group time to view and discuss a range of paintings from the 19th Century period. Over the hour-long session, the group spent approximately 20 minutes learning about the Turner painting and the influence that Thomas Molton had had upon Turner's work; Famous for introducing Turner to the '*need to balance mathematical theory of perspective with the evidence of the eye.*'

Group members were led around the gallery space discussing the style and techniques which emerged throughout the 19th Century. Gabriella asked the group to identify differences within the pictures, to tap into the Constable's use of texture, for example. The 'cult of beauty,' symbolism of decadence and religious undertones were introduced in reference to the various pieces. Details in the frames of paintings were highlighted and the back stories of the artists (involving their friendships, links to one another, and positions of status) were discussed. Gabriella drew attention to associations between numerous artifacts that were positioned around the room. The last section of the tour moved away from the 19th Century Art Gallery to the East Meets West Gallery, where there was a short introduction to a plate which featured another Oxford scene.

After the session was complete Gabriella provided members of the group with a paper handout. The handout recapped that information that had been discussed on the tour.



OUTPUTS

- ***New perspectives***

Many members of the group had been aware of the recent acquisition, and this had triggered their interest in the Turner painting. When asked about their experience of the painting they reported:

'I have walked past [the High Street] many times without studying it';

'helps to appreciate the background of who painted it';

'I will go to the High Street and view it from the same viewpoint as Turner (I will then better understand the extent of his artistic license)'

As a consequence of viewing the painting, it appears members of the group will now appreciate the local setting and the artwork through a new lens.

OUTCOMES

- ***The organisational relationship between the U3A and the museum***
- ***Sustained shared thinking***

The group's leader, Anthony Burdall instigated the Faringdon U3A 'Ashmolean Museum Special Interest Group'. Anthony and Jude Barrett, (Adult Education Officer, Ashmolean Museum), have between them established a list of topical sessions for the group to attend. Each group member contacts and arranges payment to Anthony in advance of their session. Members may attend any sessions which take their interest.

The group sessions provide these frequent attendees with an opportunity to congregate and discuss their learning. Month by month, members of the Ashmolean Museum Special Interest Group are introduced to new aspects of the collections which they reported to enjoy attending as a group. While the tour was in progress, many members of the group discussed their knowledge which related to interlinking aspects of the collection. The group was able to, in part, answer each other's questions about the subject, context, and related work – even though at times they looked to their guide for more comprehensive answers.

IMPACTS

- ***Engagement with members from the U3A***
- ***Insight into the collections***
- ***Onsite opportunities (to explore collections and visit exhibits)***

Having had a range of professional careers from lecturing, secondary teaching, and medicine the knowledge base of the group was reported as being '*at quite a high level*' (member of the Faringdon U3A). Members of the group expressed expectations to have collections explained to them in a way that they would learn information additional to their existing understandings. Some members of the group reported a dissatisfaction with the quality of the tour that they had received (reasoning is explored in the 'Quality' subsection).

A desire to continue exploring the breadth of museum collections seemed to be shared across the group. One member commented:

'frustratingly one always wants more than can be squeezed out of 60 mins. Anthony organised a full day visit some while ago which was excellent' (member of the Faringdon U3A)

'My wife and I also booked into the sub-aqua Sicilian Exhibition for this afternoon on the back of the Turner talk' (member of the Faringdon U3A)

Visiting the museum with the U3A provided a motivation to access other services offered by the museum, as well as different parts of the collections.

QUALITY

- ***Session content and Q & A***
- ***Necessity to provide value for money***

- **Discussion materials**
- **Accessibility**

Regrettably members of the group commented that this session had not lived up to their expectations and *'did not compare favourably'* to others tours attended by the U3A. Seeking an extra 'depth' from their learning, some members of the group asked questions to their guide, although it was noted that *'comprehensive answers were not forthcoming.'* One member of the Faringdon U3A suggested that at the start of each tour guides should have an informal conversation with group members to understand the existing knowledge base and group's learning level.

Throughout the tour, Gabriella held up a number of printed images to support the focus of her discussion. Unfortunately, these sheets looked rather tired. One attendee commented that *'holding up crumpled A4 photocopies of stuff is not really good enough'*. The group also felt that having handouts at the start of the session would have been more beneficial than receiving printouts at the end.

However, members of the group did report finding the content of the session *'interesting'* and were thankful that the session had been made available. Group members reported that the content covered seemed appropriate for the time given.

The group was also pleased with the museum's level of accessibility. All attendees were provided with working headphones at the start of the tour. While this provisioning was initially seen as an advantage, many attendees removed them part way through— closing comments from group members were that the ear plugs had become uncomfortable to wear over a lengthy period. Throughout the tour, one member of the group opted to use the lift facilities as opposed to museum stairs. He commented that:

'Excellent reorganization has improved the Ashmolean's accessibility greatly' (member of the Faringdon U3A).

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Gabriella maintained good eye contact with members of the group and posed questions throughout the session. When the group asked Gabriella some very targeted questions, she was less able to answer to the level required by this particular group. The group enjoyed the way that their guide linked the work of different artists, detailing their educational backgrounds, friendships, and employments. One member of the group had commented that he found the thick accent of the guide hard to understand and this may have affected his *'optimal learning'*. Upon leaving members of the group appeared very thankful.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Introduce an informal discussion at the start of the session (to assess group knowledge base)
- Prepare gallery lecturers for the high expectations of this group
- Ensure supporting resources and handouts are of reasonable quality
- Address uncomfortable head phone

APPENDIX - CASE STUDIES: IN-DEPTH EVALUATIONS

'I CAN MAKE' COLLABORATION

This project worked with Year 9s from Oxford Spires Academy and ran over a total of seven sessions. The course was devised and co-coordinated by Helen Ward, Deputy Head of Education at the Ashmolean; Clare Cory, the Museum's Education Officer for Secondary and Young People; and Chris Thorpe, from the external company 'I Can Make' specialists digital technologies and 3D printing. For the final session, an external artist, Jon Lockhart was introduced to the project.

During the project up to 13, Year 9 students attended sessions, accompanied by two of their school teachers and on occasion some of the school's sixth formers.

COLLABORATIONS

With external agencies

Chris Thorpe of 'I Can Make' was employed by the Ashmolean Museum to collaboratively deliver the project, alongside museum staff. This collaboration complimented the Museum's interest to experiment and incorporate digital learning tools within museum programmes.

'we thought perhaps if we can start to make children understand what 3d printing can do then maybe actually we can start them thinking about manufacturing and the life cycle objects and things like that – so that is where the educational side of it started to develop' (Chris Thorpe – I Can Make)

With the school

The participating school was known to the museum as one of Oxford University and Museum's 'widening participation schools.' These schools are considered typically unable to readily access these types of projects or resources without additional support through the museum's service. .

With the bloggers

The school's sixth formers became involved in the project due to their interested in blogging and photo journalism. Over the duration of the course, they were able to capture and document the activity of the Year 9 group as they engaged in a range of activities. The documentary project produced by the sixth formers has now been published online and is accessible through the Ashmolean Museum's website.

<http://www.ashmolean.org/ashwpress/turnersoxford/2016/05/26/walking-the-high-street-clare-cory-ashmolean/>

AIMS

Museum aims

The Museum has strong links with the University Widening Participation team who work to increase access to the University of Oxford for local students and to build aspirations. In discussion with teachers, the wider benefits of the project for students were discussed and included:

- Experience and use new technologies including 3D printing, Minecraft, and CAD
- Explore the painting, Turner's life and further examples of his work at the Museum
- Achieve Discover Arts Award
- Share experiences and skills with peers in school
- Increase awareness of a range of career pathways in museums and ICT

Museum staff also hoped for a range of unexpected outcomes.

'I think when you have been a teacher you think in a very specific concrete way, where you know you might have all the aims up there in the sky but you think about pinning it down, within a time frame, with, where you have a set of clear outcomes. Although we also want there to be a set of outcomes that we hadn't anticipated, to see what the students bring to it and also what they take from it will be really fascinating to me' (Clare Cory, Ashmolean Museum).

Students were selected by the school to attend the course on the basis of *'their ability in Art or Design and Technology, with an eye to maintaining a fair proportion of Pupil Premium students and students of different ethnicities'* (Dr. Watson, Oxford Spires Academy)

School aims

For Dr. Watson, the Oxford Spire's Head of Sixth form, there was an underlying aim to introduce the class group to objects which *'they would have otherwise just had to imagine.'* Dr. Watson was excited about the formal and informal learning which she envisaged would take place over the course. She is also passionate about widening access to university and to forging strong links with the University of Oxford.

Student aim

Before starting the course, the class group suggested they rarely, if ever, access the museum and its services. They were excited to be involved in the activity programme for a number of different reasons which involved: creativity, accessing new experiences, group collaboration, and potential knowledge gains.

The Year 9 class group felt that over the duration of the course they would learn: new skills (27%); new art knowledge (27%); confidence (18%); general knowledge (9%); learning different subject matter (9%) and be able to skip RE (9%).

SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND THE FOCUS ON THE PAINTING

Week 1: Introductory session

- Initial meeting with the student groups: Sixth formers (4) and Year 9 class (13).at their school
- A replica of the Turner painting was presented to the class group
- During this session, the students played memory games using puzzle pieces. They were asked to reflect on the High Street as they remembered it.
- Clare discussed plans incorporate Turner's face onto the new £20 notes, this activity highlighted the artist's significance to students.
- Students learned about the structure of the course and the possibility of achieving their Discover Arts Award.
- Students voted their favourite aspect of art and design to be: creativity (5); expression (3); drawing (2); making (1); producing (1); design (1); graffiti (1); everything (1)

- These students felt that ‘art’ was: imagination (5); new ideas/originality (4); creativity (3); expressing feelings (1); being yourself (1); Capturing a moment in time (1); sharing (1); and making your ideas reality (1); drawing (1); gallery installations (1).

Week 2: Focus on Turner and the painting

- Session 1 led by Ashmolean Museum Staff: Year 9 class (13); no sixth for students were present.
- A museum based session – predominantly located in the 19th Century Art Gallery.
- The group reflected on the last week's session, reiterating the facts that they had learned about Turner and the painting.
- During this session, the group completed a drawing activity where they were required to sketch the Turner painting while having their eyes closed. During the subsequent discussion, Clare introduced perspective and scale, as well as the concept of ‘vanishing points.’
- There were broad discussions involving various elements of the painting, including sounds, characters, smells, choices the artist made and so on. What sounds would you hear? ‘Talking’; ‘Footsteps from people walking’; ‘Wind.’ Clare drew attention to the church spires which prompted students to note the sound of bells. There was also a discussion about traffic noise. What about smells? ‘Horses’; ‘That smell of wet concrete like when it rains’.
- Students completed a true or false quiz using pre-prepared ‘quiz packs’ which contained various images and true/ false question materials. In a review of the activity, students received additional information about the life and history of Turner. Was the person who commissioned the painting happy with it? *‘I don't see how anybody could be unhappy with it.’*
- Students met Colin Harrison, the Ashmolean Museum's Curator beside the painting. Using their own pre-prepared questions, students asked Colin about the scene and how Turner managed to capture that moment in time. The also queried the significance of the painting and why it is important for it to be kept at the museum.
- Students also visited the Western Art Print Room which *‘houses one of the finest collections in Britain of European graphic arts from the fifteenth century to the present day’* (Ashmolean Museum, 2012). In the print room students were able to have a close first-hand view of rarely seen watercolours by Turner. Caroline Palmer, the Print Room Supervisor at the museum talked about their original context, explaining how they had been commissioned for the Oxford Almanac.. Using museum iPads, students photographed these collections and used ‘pic collage’ software to creatively document their experience.
- Students also visited the ‘Architecture in Miniature’ exhibition to see models of famous Oxford buildings created by local artists and to consider the nature of 2D and 3D representation.

‘Obviously being in the gallery and seeing everything in the print room is quite special, just hearing the different insights. There’s so much information about Turner online and in books but to have people that work around his paintings every day I think is quite special’ (Year 9 student).

Week 3: Exploring and capturing the High Street

- This was planned as an optional session – with hindsight this would have been a core session.
- 5 Year 9s and two sixth formers attended the session
- This session was roughly split into two sections. For the first part of the session, students explored the High Street and compared the real view to Turner’s representation (using postcard images of the painting). As we walked up and down the street staff and students discussed art/ career choices/ options etc... they also played a game of spot the difference between ‘then and now’: *‘its paved over now’; ‘there is more traffic.’*

'I didn't realise how much Turner had played with the view'; 'It's all different, you have to get in the middle of the road to see the view'; 'He moved some buildings' (Year 9 student)

'When we were looking at the picture we didn't realise how much Turner had played with it' [What did he change?]

'He played with the angles and the composition; he twisted the buildings so that you could see the details' (Year 9 student)

- For the second part of the session, students received a tour around Queen's College. During the tour some three of the five students asked questions about the university/building. All of the girls said that they were interested in attending University

'The visit to the High Street brought the project to life' (Dr. Watson, Oxford Spire Academy).



Week 4: Reconstructing the High Street

- Museum based session – small groups split off for a carousel of activities in the Studio and the galleries
- 11 students and one-sixth former
- Group activity: pretend to be Turner, jot down what he might say if he had been dropped into our modern High Street – *'The spires are still there'; 'What are those red moving things?'* (Year 9 students)
- Chris demonstrated the motorised 360 camera which he has used to collect images during last week's session and a discussion of how technology can re-synthesise the images to create a detailed map of the High Street.
- After introducing 'depth' and perspective throughout a PowerPoint presentation, Chris got students up to participate in a pair exercise to demonstrate how our eyes function together.
- Computer modeling – in small groups students worked with Chris on creating a series of relief models of the Oxford High Street. These models were informed by photos captured the week before. Chris had a pre-design 'basic template' of different buildings for the groups to work through, in an activity which required them to choose whether sections of the building protruded from the building, or not. Students watched

Chris operate the software, but due to the small group size and interactive nature Chris' instruction, students were able to stay focused on the task.

- Exploring museum exhibits and 3D Catch – On route to the 'Crossing Cultures' exhibit, Helen led the group to Angela Palmer's etched '3D' representation of a mummified child, which was presented next to the original mummified body. This started discussions about the various techniques which can be used to represent 3Dimension objects; and also the morbid content of the artwork. Once they had reached the Crossing Cultures exhibition space, the iPad program 3D catch was introduced to students. Students were required to take up to 70 photos of one of the statues within the space, which would be later 'stitched together' by the app to create a digital 3D representation of the statue.
- In the gallery space, students were tasked with following the perspective lines in Turner's Oxford High-Street painting. This highlighted how much Turner had manipulated the perspective in his painting, which had been a recurring theme over the last couple of weeks

Week 5: 3D Printing the High Street

- Museum based session – located in the Education Centre for the duration of the session
- 12 students attend the session, with one-sixth former
- Recap from last week's session
- Presentation on the applied uses of CAD in architecture
- Class activity – 'The High Street of the Future.'
- 3D printing presentation from Chris
- Show of hands re-cap activity – students seemed reluctant to be involved in the discussion

Drawing on students' work from the last week's session, Chris showed students how their group decisions of depth and perspective had varied. Using the students' 3D printed designs Chris was able to demonstrate to the group the consequence of their depth perceptions and how this created numerous 3D interpretations of the same building. The role of CAD in architecture was discussed as a progressive way to design buildings and students were given insight into how such programs can be used to model environmental conditions at the initial point of the design.

There was a creative task to remodel 'the High Street of the future' after a catastrophe, which required students to think about forms of transport and shop frontages in their conceptualisations. There was a brief talk about the old and new architecture throughout the city; references were made to the Zaha Hadid building at St Anthony's College and the Blavatnik School of Government University building. Throughout the session, students would take turns to see another presentation from Chris where he would describe the process of 3D printing in more detail. During this time activities took place concurrently, at times this was distracting for the students who were required to collage while sat at tables.

Who found it hard to change the High Street because you like it as it is? (3 students raised their hands) What themes do you think future planners should focus on? *'More greenery,' 'Different use of materials'; 'It is hard to completely re-imagine something.'*

When asked to describe the concept behind her artwork Nadia suggested: *'In the future, it can only get better. Children born today wouldn't know it as it was before so it would be very different.'*

Student groups were shown printed models of their own CAD designs. Chris explained how 3D printing worked (in this case using cornstarch) and a process of heating and cooling; He was able to show students a range of different techniques using a range of well selected YouTube clips. Throughout the session, Chris linked content to popular

culture i.e. parts made for Formula 1 and the latest Star Wars movie; other uses for 3D printing included to build houses and for medical purposes i.e. teeth, heart stents, hip replacements, plaster casts, etc... The presentation was less interactive than last week's, but was very informative – students seemed engaged, and the use of mixed media kept their focus

Week 6 (The High Street of Tomorrow)

- Museum based session – located in the Education Centre for the duration of the session.
- Ten students present, four sixth formers.
- Instead of the session being led by Chris Thorpe (of I Can Make), the session was taken by Jon Lockhart, a conceptual artist known to the museum for his work on another project
- This session consisted of one main activity where students were required to make a cardboard model of the High Street.
- Jon had rigged up an easel and used woolen threads to create a display of perspective at one of the tables in the classroom. This rig utilised the sightlines of the Turner painting which the group had been exploring over the last couple of weeks. The display amplified the use of perspective within the picture by adding the third dimension students were able to bring the picture to life in 3D.
- Students were tasked with modeling different building from the picture; this required them to gauge the correct size of their models using the woollen rig.
- Using live demonstrations Jon enthused and kept them engaged with the task in hand i.e. how to use different tapes to create effects on their buildings and how to add architectural detail with smaller pieces of card.
- Five students informed me that this session had been their favourite because it has been the most involved and creative.

Week 7 (School based session)

- Students completed their Discover Arts Award Sketchbooks in school.



INPUTS

- ***School transport***
- ***Experienced and adaptable staff***
- ***The provision of space***
- ***Creative resources – sketch books***
- ***Access to digital hardware***
- ***Access to a wide range of digital software***
- ***Juice and snacks***

Museum staff coordinating the programme were trained teachers and had long careers as museums educators. Their experiences of working with children from wide ranging age groups and knowledge of museum education were complementary to Chris's passion for new technologies and digital learning experiences. These characteristics turned out to be invaluable to the activity programme, as, on this project, the responsibilities of the 'I Can Make' company were not fully upheld (see the Staffing and Quality subsections for more detail). Museum staff were able to devise on the spot 'add-on' activities for students who had completed tasks or needed encouragement to persevere i.e. labeling features of pictures on art work.

Many of the sessions were based in the museum's Education Centre. This space served as a meeting point, a classroom and a space for creative activities. In some sessions, students did explore other aspects of the museum collections.

Part way through the course students were allocated sketch books which they could use to record their work. These sketchbooks were used to create the portfolios for student Discover Arts Awards.

Across sessions, students were introduced to a range of digital hardware. Over the duration of the programme students used cameras and iPads, they also had demonstrations of the 'I Can Make' motorised camera and 3D printing equipment. Students were also introduced to new digital software. New software included 'SLACK' an online messenger service for group working and file sharing; 'Pic Collage,' an app to stitch together captured images; and '1, 2, 3, Catch' a 3D imaging software. The year 9 group were observed working collaboratively to explore some of the programme functions.

Students were always particularly thankful for the snacks they were provided on a weekly basis.

OUTPUTS

- ***Student artwork***
- ***3D representation of the High Street***
- ***Sketchbooks to support the Bronze level Discover Arts Award***
- ***Sixth form blog***

During each session students completed a range of creative tasks; these tasks often involved drawing but in the final week also included cardboard modeling as the 3D representation of the High Street was created.

When combined student artwork created individual portfolios of evidence, necessary for students' to achieve their Discover Arts Award. In addition to their portfolios and in order to achieve their Arts Award students were required to find out about the life and works of J.M.W. Turner, they were observed to do so across the duration of the course.

A particularly valuable additional course output was the blog post created by the sixth form group. The project journey was documented throughout and is now published online (available through the [Ashmolean website](#))

OUTCOMES

- ***Participation in art activities***
- ***Increased familiarity with the museum and its collections***
- ***Group working***
- ***Sustained shared thinking***

As discussed over the duration of the course students had numerous opportunities to participate in art activities. During sessions, students were also invited to explore various aspects of the museum collections, all of which linked back to their sessional learning.

At the start of the course it was evident that students' had a level of familiarity with one another (as they were from the same year group, from the Oxford Spires Academy). However, this project brought together many students who were not necessarily used to working with one another. Through imposed group arrangements students were required to interact with various members of the group, and, while students initially appeared shy (at the start of the course), by completion it was evident that new friendships had been made and that students were interacting at ease.

Over the sessions, there were also multiple tasks that required group discussion. Often in smaller group work arrangements students were observed to build upon the ideas of one another as they came to shared solutions.

IMPACTS

- ***A newly established link between the Head of Sixth Form and the Ashmolean Museum***
- ***Real life experience of the arts***
- ***Insight into a variety of careers***
- ***Experience of digital software and hardware***
- ***Experience of learning in new environments***
- ***Published blog (sixth formers)***

Prior to the project, Dr. Watson had not worked with the Ashmolean Museum. She reported that liaison between the school and the museum had been excellent; she reported feeling that the project had been highly motivating for students and was easy to manage as a teacher.

Dr. Watson praised the project for offering the students a real-life experience of art at a time when students were beginning to think about their careers. The project enabled students to learn about career possibilities in creative industries and also in museum services - experiences they would not have otherwise encountered.



It was felt that the experience also contributed to formal and informal learning. Dr. Watson reflected that: *'[students] learned a lot about art and architecture, but more than this, they learned soft skills such as communication and teamwork, as they worked in flexible groups through the different sessions. They grew in confidence through having to talk to adults with whom they were not familiar, and being interviewed by Sixth Form students'*.

For students, upon completion of the course they reported having learnt: about 3D printing (25%); new art skills (19%); group working (19%); the life and work of Turner (12.5); about Oxford (12.5%); architecture (6.25%) and life skills (6.25%). The humour of the class group was also evident in their responses as students' reported also learning:

'How annoying cardboard is'; and 'How many stairs there are at the museum' (Year 9 class group)

Furthermore, the activity programme permitted students to access to a range of digital technologies and introduction to imagining software. Week by week, students had opportunities to use a range of new software and view demonstrations of digital hardware.

Across the course, students were required to explore different areas of the museum and also locations in their home city. However one young girl, when asked if she now felt more familiar with the museum as a whole, she reported not. The reason for this was that she felt the majority of sessions had been held downstairs in the Education Centre. When asked if these type of sessions boosted student engagement with the museum or university bodies, Dr. Watson commented that:

'Time will tell – but our students often don't feel very familiar with the centre of town, or with so-called 'elite' institutions. I am certain that their time in the museum (and even on the High Street) made them more familiar with places and more likely to feel comfortable there in future.'

For the Sixth Form students, the process of documenting the project required not only teamwork and collaboration but also a competency to use the appropriate software. Students photographed and blogged about each one of the sessions, and their final work was published online. The school's Head of Sixth Form, Dr. Watson reported that the experience of blogging was a particularly helpful experience for those considering art and film related courses at university.

QUALITY

- ***Good quality and at an appropriate learning level***
- ***Prioritise the organisation of Arts Award portfolio evidence.***
- ***Student feedback suggested the course could be improved by having fewer (or more interactive) presentations and less drawing activities.***

School staff were pleased with the quality of the programme that students had received, rating it '9/10 across the series'. Dr. Watson commented that the sessions had been '*appropriately pitched and engaging for our students,*' she also described the '*caring and considerate organisation – students appreciated the many little kindnesses (such as biscuits!)*' which had helped students to feel at home. Furthermore, she reported that '*presentations were varied and effective, and activities catered for different learning styles.*'

Dr. Watson believed that participation in this activity programme had made '*the group of Year 9 students feel special, and boosted their confidence, their skills and their understanding of Art*'. More widely, due to school presentations and newsletters, Dr. Watson believed that the project had made the Ashmolean Museum more familiar to parents who were engaging with the school.

Students and teachers did make some suggestions as to how the course might be improved. For teaching staff, this involved the organization of student portfolios, which would avoid the rush to compile evidence at the end of the course. For students, they suggested a preference for more creative learning activities as, at times, they had found the PowerPoint presentations boring as they were not able to participate. They liked discovering new technologies such as 3D catch, and also capturing photos on the High Street. Students were less enamored with drawing activities as this was the kind of activity they '*could do anywhere.*'

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Chris Thorpe from I Can Make's passion for digital learning was evident through discussion and student presentations. However, Chris appeared less confident working with the Year 9 class group. Although he had given time to plan out thoughtful activities, he was limited in his ability to adapt these in response to student interest and ideas. There were also some last minute changes to sessions because of technical failures with the 3D printing equipment.

At such times, the experience and quick thinking of museum staff was observed. Both Clare Cory (Museum's Education Officer for Secondary and Young People) and Helen Ward (Deputy Head of Education at the Ashmolean) were able to devise 'on the spot' activities to fill student time and encourage task perseverance.

For the last session, a decision was made to replace Chris Thorpe with the conceptual artist Jon Lockhart. At this time Jon was also leading a successful Turner themed collaboration project which with the CRISIS Skylight Centre .

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Seek references of external consultants when commissioning work for the first time

- During planning stages discuss the responsibility and accountability, of course, alterations.
- Continue to draw upon staff/collaborators known for their successful reputation
- Ensure that transportation is available for all sessions.
- Provide refreshments. When students were asked what they would remember from the course '*the hobnobs*' was the first answer.
- Offer students a wider range of creative and practical activities.
- Ensure that there is an interactive element to learning presentations.
- Allow students more time to explore the museum and its collections.
- Dedicate session time to compile Arts Award Portfolios

CRISIS COLLABORATION 'PIERCING THE SKY.'

Running over a total of eleven sessions it was proposed that the museum would work with the CRISIS homeless charity, supporting members to learn about art and to produce two exhibition pieces. These exhibition pieces were to be displayed at the Old Fire Station and the Ashmolean Museum. The course was coordinated by Jon Lockhart, a conceptual artist who has been introduced to the charity through the museum's employment; and Lucy Procter who had been working as an art tutor at the Old Fire Station. This community outreach project was also supported by Nicola Bird, one of the Joint Museum Education Team's Community Education Officers.

Over the course, seventeen members were involved in the project, with nine attending well or consistently. For this target group, this level of attendance was considered successful.

COLLABORATIONS

There were a number of collaborations throughout this project. The relationships between the artists' employment and the CRISIS charity will be briefly introduced with sessional collaborations described within the relevant week.

With the external artist – Jon Lockhart

'We have not worked with Jon before but we actually interviewed him last year when we were selecting artists to work on the Manet project and at that time he didn't fit that project, but we earmarked him as someone we would really like to work with, because his whole approach is really kind of rooted in responding to participants and responding to things as a project develops' (Helen Ward, Deputy of Education at the Ashmolean Museum).

'Initially caught up with Nicola and talked about 'a' project, with 'a' target group, from the Turner painting, but it was only latterly that Arts at the Old Fire Station were told about the project, and it really peaked their interest in terms of how it could engage with their members. The bones of the project were there before CRISIS got involved, but it since evolved because it seemed really enriching with the target group and the subject of the painting' (Jon Lockhart).

Jon's approach to the art project was noted by Nicola Bird (Joint Museum's Community Education Officer) as being *'very organic, and participant-led,'* making him well suited to this group work project.

With CRISIS

'Nicola had two artists in mind, and one of the artists we had worked with before, so partly out of trying someone else and I knew one artist's work and then looking at Jon's work I thought it fitted more with what we were wanting to do' (Kate Cocker, Director of CRISIS).

'I think bringing in an external artist really raises the bar and I think will allow us to work in art forms we don't typically work in. We don't know yet where the project will go but our hunch, by the artists we've taken on, is that it will be some kind of light/sound installation' (Kate Cocker, Director of CRISIS).

With Lucy (CRISIS Art Tutor)

Lucy works as the main Arts Tutor at CRISIS, in her position, she tends to run the collaborative workshops with outside agencies *'as the person from the inside'* (Lucy Procter, CRISIS Art Tutor). She sees her role as to ensure *'that the members feel safe and to ensure that the project is not led by them but that it is always considered by them, so*

we don't work in a way where an artist takes over, but leads, so it is collaborative from both angles' (Lucy Procter, CRISIS Art Tutor). As such, Lucy acts as a bridge or gatekeeper between external agencies and the Old Fire Station's members. Jon had found reassurance in working with Lucy (described below).

With members

During preliminary interviews Jon explained the vulnerability of members to the research team, he also explained how he had not worked with this type of client group before. He appreciated Lucy's wealth of experience working at the centre and also the art space that she had created at the Old Fire Station, where most of the group work sessions were to be based.

'In my view it's such a blessing to be collaborating with her in that respect, because you know from my point of view I don't want to go in heavy footed with it, so it really is nurturing that relationship but it is also taking on board that everyone needs to be able to field the project as it were'.... Lucy has propagated such a special environment up there in the art room; it was sort of like a little hive of activity (Jon Lockhart)

Before the start of the course, Lucy explained that she had only met with Jon on one occasion, but as this time *'he got a really good response from our members'* (Lucy Procter, CRISIS Art Tutor).

As a group work project

'Some things will work and some things won't, and there will be some things that we have just got to make a decision on as a group. So there will be a lot of problem-solving, and those sessions might be really good session for you to witness, where people are learning how to work in a group and how they learn to appreciate things and make decisions and stand up for themselves and recognise that they have a voice and really experience things which maybe they haven't done since school' (Lucy Procter, CRISIS Art Tutor).

AIMS

Overarching aims of the CRISIS charity:

- To change attitudes towards homelessness.
- To engage the harder to reach public with the work of Crisis through high-quality cultural events.
- To promote member confidence and progression through art.

'The fact that we've got to put something up at the end and people have got to agree on what to do. There are a lot of learning and life skills involved in that. It's even greater when you're putting on a play and what we have learned from people when we get feedback at the end of an arts project, in particular, a performing arts one, what they have learned is how to bite their tongue and how to turn up. Those are really practical day-to-day things if you need a job or need to live in a shared house. So there's a real value to arts projects that are much more about how to end homelessness' (Kate Cocker, Director of CRISIS).

Desirable aims for the 'Piercing the Sky' activity programme:

- To share Turner's Painting in a meaningful and contextually relevant way.
- To engage members in a meaningful experience of contemporary arts practice.
- To engage Crisis members in a meaningful experience of contemporary arts practice
- To produce an excellent, accessible and relevant public exhibition at the Old Fire Station and the Ashmolean Museum

- To encourage Crisis members to visit and to feel welcome in The Ashmolean museum (and other museums)
- To work intuitively, thoughtfully and collaboratively with all stakeholders.
- For Crisis members to successfully work together as a group of artists, sharing ideas and actively challenging preconceived ideas of homelessness.
- For the Ashmolean to engage with new audiences (Museum visitors that may visit the exhibitions).
- For Crisis members to have a voice in the community.
- To enable the development of new and alternative skills with Crisis members
- To intellectually challenge the group of artists at Crisis and to engage with and to create a dialogue between their work and a wider public audience.
- To achieve a group coherence that will benefit members of CRISIS in many ways:
 1. Self esteem
 2. Intellectual stimulus
 3. Social interaction
 4. Communication skills
 5. Creative skills
 6. Reasoning
 7. Planning skills

‘For the majority of people, we’re looking at art to give them the skills to not become homeless again and it is that group dynamic and the pressure of having to do something that is a really good skill for people’ (Kate Cocker, Director of CRISIS).

‘I think art is naturally therapeutic, a lot of people go into the art room and find it calm and relaxing. If their life outside is chaotic, it will calm. I think there is also the skill that people learn. We teach people how to use different materials, how to take on different techniques’ (Kate Cocker, Director of CRISIS).

The expectations of members:

During the first session, members completed a ‘postcard task’ where they detailed notes about their expectations of the activity programme. They described:

‘Looking forward to learning about more abstract art and conceptual art. Because at the moment I don't like it’;

‘Creating something amazing and inspirational. Something that will uplift the spirit.’

Other responses involved learning about art, being on a journey, being part of a creative process and finding a way to represent feelings and emotion.

‘Each individual member has got different reasons for being there, some of them are really focusing on expressing ideas and having a bit of safe, free time and some of them are really efficient and sort of making little pieces to sell for sort of micro-economic, so then you have to think how that works when you're asking them to do something that is shared and maybe hasn't got a monetary outcome but rather an experiential outcome and that is quite alien’ (Jon Lockhart).

CONCERNS PRIOR TO THE START OF THE COURSE

During preliminary interviews, four main concerns emerged from discussions with course coordinators. For Jon concerns involved:

- **Tackling personal preconceptions** of homelessness;
- **Building a rapport** with members;
- **Create a harmonious group working environment**, which respected the needs of individual members.

Lucy's priority was to ensure that the project was **sensitive to member involvement**. She did not want people to feel scrutinized or under the spotlight of the evaluation. As such, it was agreed that evaluation of this activity programme was to be sensitive and unintrusive. Only three of the activity sessions were observed. However, 'member tours' at the museum and exhibition unveilings were also observed.

SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FOCUS ON THE PAINTING

Where it had not been possible to observe sessions it was agreed that course co-ordinators would submit diary notes to the research team. Initially, this worked well but due to workload demands diary entries were not always submitted. Where available, the reflective diaries of course coordinators and research team observations will be discussed.

Week 1 - Eye Level

- 8 members; 1 member volunteer.
- Session aim: Launching project. Looking, discussing image, exploring studio space, handing out sketchbooks.
- During the first session, members met with the staff team and also Colin Harrison, the curator of the Ashmolean Museum.
- This session was the first opportunity for the group to familiarise themselves with the painting.
- Jon, the artist, also had the painting transposed onto a cake which the group could eat together during the session. He reflected that this helped to 'break the ice' and also demystify the painting. Lucy referred to members' enjoyment of the cake in her reflective diary.
- Postcards and sketchbooks were provided for the group. It was felt that this provisioning '*elevated the sense of occasion*' (Jon Lockhart, reflective diary entry). For the group's first activity they covered their sketchbooks in self-adhesive vinyl which served as a practical, low-impact task and introduction to a new art material '*[Members] found it easy to work with and they felt it gave interesting and instant results. They liked the graphic quality to it*' (Lucy, reflective diary entry).
- Colin Harrison, the Ashmolean Museum's Curator was able to give a short talk about the Turner, background into the commission and detail into his life and times. '*He gave the start of the project a huge rubber stamp of credence...The debate and questioning that went alongside his presentation demonstrated the breadth of knowledge and understanding that is apparent amongst the members*' (Jon Lockhart, reflective diary).
- Jon's initial concerns after the first session were how he would manage to coordinate the great deal of skill and insight that was flowing between members, and '*how can one gallery space contain such far-reaching, powerful artistic personalities...We need to ensure that all levels of ability share the journey and that everyone has a solid voice*' (Jon Lockhart, reflective diary).

'Every one of the members seemed to genuinely get a lot from this first week. All seem open to the idea of thinking out the box and discovering new artists and new ways of working' (Lucy Procter, reflective diary).



Week 2 - Finding our Feet

- Six members – 2 new members. One member volunteer
- Session aim: Creating 'raw material' using photography, sketching and audio recordings from around Oxford. (specifically from the High Street area). Include visit to The Ashmolean to see the original work.
- For this second session, the group went out of the Old Fire Station and on tour of the city. They found the spot where Turner would have made his original sketches in 1810. This site visit was said to have provoked discussion about changes to the local architecture and differences in the sounds of then and now.
- Richard Bently, a sound artist, was introduced to the group as, in the previous, session some members had expressed an interest in exploring sound within the project. Jon proposed that this be combined with the group's 'field sketching' and photography on their journey around Oxford. After a brief introduction to the equipment, the group took turns to record sounds as they moved throughout the city. While some members were reluctant to use the equipment they all participated in recording, listening or directing the sound recordings. The sound recordings were to become 'raw material' for use in subsequent sessions.
- Jon reflected that the tour throughout the city *'was a shared adventure, we had a destination (the sight of Turner's image), but the reward was meandering towards that goal. We chatted, talked and reflected as we sound hunted!'* (Jon Lockhart, reflective diary).
- Upon returning to the Art Studio members reflected on the session. Lucy reported that three of the male members had particularly enjoyed the sound recording activity.

Week 3 - Piercing the Sky

- Eight members were involved in the session at different time points.
- Numerous staff contributed to the session, including Jon and Lucy (the session coordinators), Nicola (Community Outreach Officer) Penny (a poet) and Richard (the sound artist).
- Session aim: Using photography/sketching and also words/poetry as another approach to concepts and themes emerging.
- During this session, the group took a trip out to the University Church of St Mary the Virgin to access one of the city's spires.
- Upon reaching the church the group met with Penny, a poet and Heritage Education Volunteers Officer who led the session's activities. The group had a special arrangement to go inside a room at the top of the spire which is typically closed to the general public. The group completed a short poetry exercise – called 'a sense of place,' members were asked to share their poems with the group, but only staff joined in with this part of the exercise.
- The group took in the view from the top of the spire. *'The notion of 'Town and Gown' really became apparent through the stories told by our guide and also from the vantage point that the tower gave us. We could see the large land masses that the colleges occupied versus the relatively modest public areas of Oxford. It was a very poignant time in the bell tower'* (Jon Lockhart, reflective diary).
- Throughout the trip, more audio recordings were collected to add to the bank of raw material. Richard also introduced electromagnetic and ultrasonic microphones to pick up sounds that would normally be out of range of human hearing.
- *'Members took photos and scribbled in their sketchbooks and recorded sounds. Poetry, drawings, words and poetry and photos were all created'* (Lucy Procter, reflective diary).
- It was decided that the next step for the group was to pin down the focus for the exhibitions. Towards the end of the session, the group *collaboratively* discussed many ideas, including: Installation; Compartmentalization; Layers; Noise; Light and dark.

- During discussions, two members collected their sketchbooks/art materials and continued to work on their own projects. One (very talented) member showed his work to the group; he explained that the concept behind his drawing was 'the chaotic soundscape,' which had been inspired by the previous session's activities.



Week 4 - Squeaky Wheels

- Seven members, 1 volunteer member. Nicola and Jon.
- Session aim: Visual analysis of a variety of artists' works and practical activities to encourage group and participatory work.
- The group was introduced to new ways of expressing ideas in Art & Design (Installation and Conceptual Art).
- There were no observations or reflective diary entries for this session.

Week 5 - Repeat and Repeat

- No information on session attendees.
- Session aim: To work with a selection of printmaking techniques including relief, mono, and screen printing.
- The group was encouraged to explore ideas around Turner's use of reproduction, editions and Printmaking.
- There were no observations or reflective diary entries for this session.

Week 6 - Journey to the Centre

- No information on session attendees.
- Session aim: Site visits, scale drawings, models and methods for designing and implementing successful exhibitions.
- Visit the Ashmolean exhibition space. Some planning and thinking time. Agreement on elements and concepts for installation. Access to the handling collection.
- There were no observations or reflective diary entries for this session.

Week 7 - Road Maps and Viewpoints

- Seven members, one volunteer member, Jon, Lucy, and Nicola.
- Session aims: Development and making - driven by group interests and collective decisions. This session was designed as a practical session.
- The course was now at a point where members would begin to plan the logistics of the gallery space. During the first half hour members began working on their own projects, sorting sketchbooks and questioning staff about the next steps.
- The tables in the art room were positioned around the beginnings of the installation structure; the inward looking arrangement made the scaffolding of a 'spire' an avoidable focus in the room.
- Group discussion involved the positioning of objects in the exhibition space and possible health and safety concerns, such as weighing down the structure and issues adjusting the lighting rig.
- The group also discussed the construction of the final exhibition pieces. M4 raised questions about the final product. Jon had a (Cortex) material in mind which he thought would work well as a cladding for the installation structure. M4 countered this suggestion and promoted the use of bubble wrap as this would provide an interesting effect if illuminated from behind.
- Part way into the session the group divided necessary tasks which they would work on for the remainder of the session:
 1. Two members had already become involved in animating a painting piece which would be used for a projected display onto one of the walls.
 - M8, '*a web-designer in a previous life,*' was using floor plans of the exhibition space to create a 3D model. Using this digital media, he was able to replicate an impression of the final gallery space; he would also be able to transpose the group's proposed wall art into his digital arrangement.
 - During the group work session, M3 and M8 were working collaboratively to produce the animated image of the Oxford High Street. I enquired about the 'particles' which they had included in their artwork; M8 explained that this related to 'Hook and Boyle's,' theory of gasses, gas compression and particle theory. Throughout the session, the pair worked on perfecting the perspectives of the moving objects (a person and a bicycle), which would travel down M3's representative drawing of an Oxford 'sound-scape'.
 2. Two members went out to record additional sounds – they were trying to find natural sounds to contrast against the hustle and bustle of the High-street recordings that they had gathered during previous sessions.
 3. Other members were asked to assist with measuring up the gallery space to aid with exhibition planning. Measuring the length of walls and windows as well as the positioning of plug sockets. New members reported feeling at ease with this task as they were unfamiliar with the creative direction of the project.

4. There was also a 'word task' where members were asked to reflect on centre proposed communications which would advertise the upcoming event. The agreed wording was to be used for the exhibitions supporting posters and flyers.
5. Toward the end of the session, M4 became withdrawn from the group. He spent some time sitting quietly at a table on his own. Lucy spoke with him after a short time had passed and he expressed his worry about the 'comms' wording. He felt that it did not set the correct tone of the exhibition and that the exhibition was not projecting the right influence of homelessness (which was part of the initial design intention).
6. At the end of the session the objectives for the next workshop were discussed. The group decided they would focus their ideas on the Ashmolean exhibition space.



Week 8 - Stratigraphy Sandwich

- No information on session attendees.
- Session aim: Development and making driven by group's interests and collective decisions (with the specific theme of sculpture).
- Sculptural Experimentation and skills sharing.
- There were no observations or reflective diary entries for this session.

Week 9 - Mystery Tour

- No information on session attendees.
- Session aim: Development and making driven by groups interests and collective decisions.
- Designing final exhibition, finishing work.
- There were no observations or reflective diary entries for this session.

Week 10 - Impossible Spire

- 4 members attended; 1 volunteer member.
- Session aim: Planning and debriefing.
- Compiling, negotiating, finalising member's work.
- This session was introduced as somewhat as an unofficial session as the centre was having a half term break. Members' had been invited to attend to show any new work or tasks that had been completed that week.
- The main focus of the session became finalizing the sound recordings (which were required for the Old Fire Station Exhibition) and also member videos of the High Street, taken recorded from the second story of a bus as it traveled down the High Street.

Week 11 - Piercing the sky – 'Bonus Material.'

- Exhibitions: AOFS and The Ashmolean - Planning - Installing – Celebrating

Exhibition launch at the Old Fire Station linked to Arts in CRISIS - 21st July 2016

- There was a lively buzz of excitement in the room.
- During the exhibition, members celebrated their achievements and openly discussed their opinions of the final exhibition.

In conversation with M3, he described how he had been really impressed with how the exhibition had come together. Throughout the course, M3 has proven to be a talented and productive artist; he had some pieces on display in the exhibition. He talked staff through their development of each of his pieces, describing the techniques used and what the focus had been intended to represent. He recalled that the way the exhibition had come together *'wasn't what I expected but I am really proud.'* He went on to ask me if the group has inspired me to paint. After a short conversation, I suggested that I had lacked the confidence to paint; M3 reassured me *'You have got to start somewhere, all it takes is practice'* – he beamed with pride throughout the exhibition.



CRISIS members viewing the Ashmolean installation

- This unofficial session provided opportunities for members to bring family and friends to the museum to view their exhibition.
- The group was joined by Colin Harrison, the curator at the Ashmolean Museum.
- One member's mother joined the group at the exhibition; her son talked her (and the group) through the characters and features within the painting, which he reaffirmed with the museum's curator. M8 exuded knowledge to the group, which was evident in the way that he so confidently discussed various aspects of the painting (and the group's exhibited interpretation).
- Colin initiated discussion with the members about their time working on the project. All but one member joined in with the discussion about their experiences and opinions of the end product. The member who remained quiet was less involved throughout the project. The two members of the group who had been leading 'member tours' seemed very comfortable discussing the painting with Colin Harrison.
- Colin suggests he will have to find the next project for the HLF to fund and the group firmly agree.

CRISIS Museum Tours – Art in CRISIS

- Three members were giving tours which catered for 25 visitors, Rowan Padmore (CRISIS) and Caroline Cheeseman (Oxford University) were also in present throughout.
- The proposed tour was one hour long.
- Caroline (Oxford University Museums Volunteers and Outreach Assistant), introduced herself to the group and gave a short introduction to the tour, the tour guides and the work of CRISIS. She explained that the tour would also involve the personal reflections and interests of the tour guides as well as their knowledge about the various paintings that they had chosen to discuss.
- The tour group appeared to hang on every word of their tour guides; they were orientated around a total of 5 pieces within the gallery space. The pieces discussed during the tour had been selected by members of the group due to existing knowledge and/or their own personal interests in the artist or styles of work.
- Each one of the guides, even though they had received the same training, was able to add their own personal touch to their roles as guides. M13 was incredibly engaging and used humour and questioning with the audience. M14 spoke about two paintings with very different styles, he referenced their surrounding myths and explained his personal engagement with the gothic style of one of the pieces – a flair for 'performing' evident. M8 was the final guide to speak; he had chosen to discuss the characters painted on an armoire, whom he brought to life through his discussion of the muse and her relationship with the artist.
- Having these personal insights highlighted the link to the usually unacknowledged life of the artists and their families; this technique certainly added a playful dimension to the tours. As an observer, I felt as though I had learned a lot regarding the curiosities of the pieces.
- At the end of the session, there was a big round of applause, the majority of the crowd dispersed but some individuals asked further questions about each one of the pieces. The atmosphere was relaxed, and visitors thanked the group for their insights.

INPUTS

- ***Sustenance***
- ***Provisions for individual members***
- ***Art materials***
- ***Community Engagement***
- ***External employments***
- ***Support from museum staff***

Throughout the programme, members had access to tea, coffee and snacks (bananas, flapjacks, etc...). During the first session, Jon had a specially made with an image of the Turner painting printed on top, which the group could consume. At the Old Fire Station exhibition event cocktails and canapes added to the celebratory atmosphere.

Each member who participated in the course received a copy of the Turner postcard and also a sketch book for their own use. While in the art room at the Old Fire Station members had access to a wealth of art materials. Members were allowed to access the art room during the programmes supplementary art sessions.

Links with the Old Fire Station had been established by Nicola Bird, the Joint Museum's Community Education Officer. Nicola attended the sessions providing a familiar face and as a representative of the Museum body. In addition to Jon Lockhart's employment through the Museum service, a number of external collaborators were introduced to the project. These included Richard Bently (the sound artist who joined the group during weeks 2 and 3) who provided equipment and editing of raw audio material; Penny, the poet, who led the session during week 3 and gave the tour of the church spire.

Both the Curator of the Ashmolean Museum, Colin Harrison and Caroline Cheeseman, one of the University's Museum Volunteer and Outreach Assistant worked closely with members on the Art in Crisis tours, giving insight into the painting but also training on how to lead tours and engage with museum audiences.

OUTPUTS

- ***Personal sketchbooks and poetry***
- ***Works of art***
- ***Photographs***
- ***Installation at the Old Fire Station***
- ***Installation at the Ashmolean Museum***
- ***Member tours***

Equipped from the start of the project members had the creative freedom to add to their own sketchbooks. During sessions, they were also encouraged to participate in additional activities, such as poetry writing. Members were free to keep all sessional 'outputs,' as these were their own personal works of art.

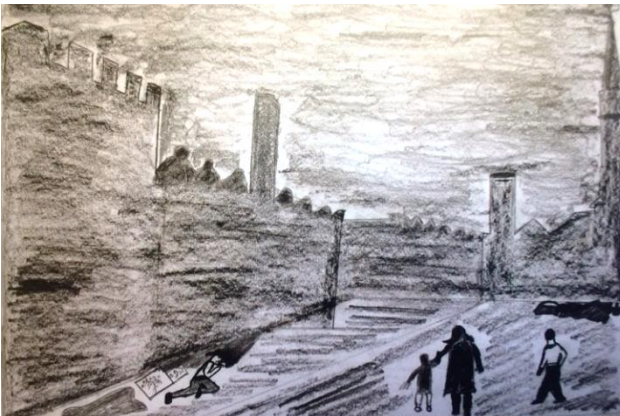
The project was documented by one member volunteer who had a background in photojournalism. Over the course of the project, he collected a series of photographs, which showed group members at work and out on field visits. M14 also collected a series of supplementary photographs or items or persons which took his interest while he was documenting the project. He explained that he would like to turn these collections into two coffee table books, one of which had a focus on characters found in Oxford's Covered Market.



The exhibition at the Old Fire Station provided a space to showcase the majority of member's outputs. Within this space, small pieces had been arranged alongside the much larger installation, with complementary lighting displays and supporting soundscapes. CRISIS also prepared a handout to support the exhibition which described some of the highlights from the exhibition, alongside descriptions of their purposeful design.

Felt tip cityscape:

'I was trying to express the chaos of Oxford High Street and modern day living. This seems the opposite to Turner's painting in 1810. The ancient buildings that tourists come to see are somehow lost between the sky and the street.'



A Walk in the High Street: A Journey Through Time:

'I wanted to bring a taste of Oxford from two different times: Turner's time and today. In it, we see the history of the buildings to where we are now. The shadows on my pictures show these two different times. It's 6 pm, it's getting dark. The family is me, my mother and my brother. There is also hardship and poverty, representing the complexity of the city. But, also moving forward, how there is hardship but we look for hope and something to hold onto'.

Members also prepared for a second installation at the Ashmolean Museum, which was displayed alongside the work of two other community groups. The final piece was visible through a slashed replica of the Turner painting, which allowed the viewer to peer inside a scene of homelessness. Through the slashed painting it was possible to view an arrangement of cardboard and sleeping bags on the floor.

Member tours may also be considered an output of engagement with the museum. Members who had volunteered to give tours had received training and handouts from the museum; they were also required to revise the material.

OUTCOMES

- ***Introduction to the Turner***
- ***Enthusiasm to participate in a collaborative project***
- ***A new perspective***
- ***Discovering new ways of working***
- ***Group work***
- ***Negotiation and acceptance***

Jeremy Spafford, a Director from the Old Fire Station, commented that across the project journey, members were not just introduced to the life and works of Turner, but that:

'you get a load of insightful, skilled, creative people who are able to make observations, creative observations about a piece of art work which has got nothing to do with the fact that they are homeless... But then equally, because of their background around homelessness, what they are also able to see within that picture, is the layer of, the stories that are within the picture of this massive beautiful, solid, kind of age-defying structure, and that is kind of the Oxford that everyone know and loves, and there, within it are these people who are trying to manage their lives and survive in a complicated world, messy world, in a quite invisible way'.

Member engagement with the subject but also with the idea of the collaborative project was evident from the beginning of the course. During the second week, the group began using a 'working wall' to which they all contributed suggestions. *'I think the seeds have been planted with some of the members* (Jon Lockhart, Week 2 reflective diary). One member commented that he was *'Loving the project already and really looking forward to what might be created for the installation'* (Lucy Procter, Week 2 reflective diary).

Group outings at the beginning of the course contributed rich discussions about Oxford. In Week 3, the group's trip to the church tower provided not only a new vantage point of their home city but also informed discussions of a 'compartmentalized Oxford.' The trip was said to have highlighted the juxtaposition between the general Oxford population and distinction to those able to access university colleges.

Over the duration of the project, members discovered new ways of working, immersing themselves in new techniques, technologies, and collaborative arrangements. Project staff, Jon, Lucy, and Nicola persistently reminded the group of the shared end goal and were able to oversee how the group's range of mini projects would be able to contribute to the final exhibition. Working with this end goal in mind the group were required to collaborate and consolidate their ideas. The course provided opportunities which required planning and time management, team working and role allocation. It was clear that the group knew what they needed to do, not matter how daunting the task.

'We have the ingredients; we need to work out the recipe, and then we will bake the cake' (member, CRISIS).

During the same discussion a new member criticised the group's efforts in response another member demonstrated a determined retaliation:

'It sounds like you're all coming from different perspectives'// 'No it's not like that at all'// 'I think that we are getting to that point now where we have the ideas and now it is just bringing it together' (member, CRISIS)

At the Old Fire Station exhibition, I asked one member, M1, if he felt proud of the groups' achievements. He suggested that he had some reservations so his response would have to be *'yes and no,'* due to *'sustained effort in the wrong direction.'* M1 openly spoke about having Asperger's Syndrome and he reported feeling disappointed that he had spent hours working on his imagined soundscape which once interpreted into the exhibition space was different to what he had anticipated; This said he was proud that the group had achieved their end goal.

IMPACTS

The impacts of the project can be conceptualised in a number ways:

- 1) Community engagement with the CRISIS organisation
- 2) CRISIS engagement with the Ashmolean Museum

- 3) Group impacts
- 4) Personal impacts (staff and members)

Community engagement

- **Tackling preconceptions of homelessness**
- **A new style of tour guide**

A short survey was deployed after the Member Tours at the Ashmolean Museum. One hundred percent of visitors reported having enjoyed the tour (77% very much so, 33% somewhat), attendees were very thankful for the personal insights that members added to their discussion of the museum collections. Sixty-nine percent of museum attendees suggested that they now wanted to view the CRISIS installations at the Ashmolean Museum and also at the Old Fire Station. Comments from the tour group detailed their unwarranted preconceptions and established the tour guides as informative and interesting people in their own right.

'Yes it has given me a new insight into looking at how homeless people live and challenged my pre-conceptions that they are solely occupied with homelessness - they have interests too!'

'It has given me and understanding that people have a passion for art, no matter what their circumstances may be or may have been'

Furthermore, responses detailed the group's thankfulness to have received a museum tour from people that they could relate to, as opposed to the typical style of museum tours.

'I really would like to see all three speakers return to do more tours in the future. On a personal note, I don't really like tours because I perceive them as academic or delivered by a certain type of tour guide (which I know is terribly prejudiced of me!). It was lovely to be toured around by a group of people whom I could relate to, who felt ordinary and were really passionate about the works they were sharing'.

'The tour was really informative and so lovely to hear a non-traditional narrative and personal points of interest about the art along with factual information - more funding for projects like this would be welcome.'

'Just watching the three speakers and the warmth and enthusiasm with which they spoke during the tour and then afterward about their relationship with the work and the experiences they had had is a tribute to the centre and museum staff who made the opportunities happen. However, most of all to the participants themselves who are fantastic advocates for the people on our streets who so often go unnoticed'.

Engagement between CRISIS and the Ashmolean Museum

- **Collaboration**
- **Access to opportunities**
- **Bridging organisations**

As detailed within the sessional activities, the group engaged with a number of staff from the Ashmolean Museum. Each weekly session was attended by Nicola Bird, one of the Joint Museums' Community Education Officers who was able to support the group along their journey giving insight and encouragement into the museum's expectations and requirements. The group also received instruction from Colin Harrison, the museum's curator and worked with Caroline Cheeseman to create the Member Tours which took place in the summer of 2016. The project permitted access to opportunities which are not readily available to members of the general public, as it allowed members

explore their own creative interests and exhibit work in a respected museum. The project provided many opportunities for members to be involved with the museum, as they completed recces of the available exhibition space and took friends and family to view the final installation.

The publicity that each of the exhibitions offered worked favourably for both the museum and charity organisations.

'I think the project has been an amazing bridge between the two organisations. We have had visitors who otherwise might not have come to the Old Fire Station and vice versa' (Rowan Padmore – Coordinator of the Arts in CRISIS).

Having viewed one, the exhibitions members of the public and various staff members had felt inspired to view the second installation piece.

Group impacts

- ***Making the museum accessible***
- ***Working as a team***
- ***Exhibiting group work***

For members who contributed to the 'Piercing the Sky' project one impact of their sustained involvement with the museum was that the museum felt increasing more accessible. A notable consideration for a group of people who, *'don't think of museums as available to them... a big benefit of anything like this is going to the museum and feeling comfortable'* (Kate Cocker, Director of CRISIS).

The end goal of the museum project required collaboration, and this was evident through observations. In discussions with one member, I ask if there had been anything about the project that had come as a surprise, M14 suggested he had been impressed with the way that the group consistently worked as *'one team with one goal.'* Furthermore and in reference to the final exhibition, he added that he *'doesn't think many in the group have exhibited before or feel worthy of exhibiting.'* Both working together and managing to produce two final exhibition pieces are a huge credit to each one of the group's members.

Impacts on a personal level (staff and members)

Upon project completion, project coordinators were interviewed for an evaluative discussion. At this time the project's 'impact' at a personal level was discussed. Staff agreed that across the duration of the project there was one particular member involvement which, more than any other, was considered a great success. This particular member accompanied the group as a documenter of the project.

'which has been really helpful for us as an organisation but it has also been really informative in a way that it has paved the way for him as a photographer in his right' (Lucy Procter, CRISIS).

'alongside the raw documentation of the project he has started going off on tangents about Oxford and homelessness and the people of Oxford versus architecture, and the work almost started to become his own, in response to the ongoing project with CRISIS' (John Lockhart, external artist).

M14 explained that he had been collecting these additional images for publication as 'coffee table books,' one of which would portrait life in Oxford's covered market, with particular attention given to the stall holders and another one of 'hidden Oxford.'

'It has gone in a slightly different direction to what we first thought, but it has made a standalone piece of work' (Lucy Procter, CRISIS).

M14's collection of images has also been used to create his own exhibition at the Old Fire Station. In addition to his work as project documenter, this particular member had also volunteered to give CRISIS Member Tours around the Ashmolean. In a discussion about the tours, M14 explained he had been so enthused by the task that one night he stayed up until 2 am following various threads of information as he completed his own revision of the painting. The night before the tours he had felt apprehensive and wondered if he would be able to recite the facts, but then in acknowledgment of his hard work, he recalled thinking *'stuff it, I'm just going to enjoy this'*. On the day he chaperoned mixed groups around the museum and reported that: *'you could see the enjoyment on their faces'* M14 said that when giving the tours *'I came into a world of my own; it was a truly memorable experience.'* Staff discussed how over the duration of the project they had been able to see his confidence and self-esteem flourish.

It is also important to consider the impacts of projects upon the working practices of staff. Colin Harrison, the Curator of the Ashmolean Museum, wanted to give special thanks to the group for the impact that they had had upon his daily working practices.

'I also want to thank you because this experience has also given me opportunities to have conversations that I otherwise wouldn't have had. I spend most of my days in an office or talking to middle aged women with white hair' (Colin Harrison, Arts Curator at the Ashmolean)

QUALITY

- *Provisioning*
- *Access to materials and services*
- *Group dynamic*
- *Supporting attendance*

Being based in the Arts Room at the Old Fire Station, members had immediate access to a range of arts based materials, as well as the availability of instruction from an art tutor, and Jon, the externally employed artist. In addition to their support, Jon and Nicola managed to facilitate links with a number of other external persons, who were able to offer additional, specialised services and access to equipment. Access to these external contracts was a benefit to the 'organic nature' or the journey.

Throughout, Nicola, Jon, and Lucy, managed to encourage the group and keep them working towards their end goal. Staff skilfully directed the group's focus, to ensure that it was led by member's interests, but that works could be consolidated to support the exhibition. Initially, Jon and Lucy's reflective diary entries suggested that it may be difficult to harness the enthusiasm of the group, as there had been so many ideas leading in so many different directions. Throughout the project, all staff managed to support and encourage individual members, as well as foster necessary team spirit and role allocations within the group.

Due to the chaotic lives of group members, sessional attendance was said to be a potential weakness of the process, however, in respect of the chaotic lives of group members difficulties in attending provide a constant challenge. This said, over the course of the project seventeen members had been involved at some point, with nine able to attend well or consistently – demonstrating an uptake which the charity organisation considers a success. One member suggested that she would prefer more evening sessions at the Old Fire Station as, after a whole day of activity that was when she felt her ideas would best inform her art. She explained how sometimes art took her into a dark place but that this process allowed her to explore her emotions.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff involved in the project were observed to have a warmth which members were drawn to. They were engaging, motivating and encouraging of all people's within the group. However, in their staff roles Nicola, Lucy and Jon were all able to offer something extra to the group. Nicola, one of the Joint Museum's Community Education Officers, was able to facilitate numerous links with contacts throughout the community, in the initial stages of setting up the project she was able to suggest two artists to the CRISIS charity so that they could agree on the person best suited to the needs of the group. Additional contacts made the trip to The University Church Spire possible, where the group was allowed access to a space not normally available for members of the public. Throughout sessions, Nicola conversed with members and questioned them about their personal interests, her rapport with group members was evident.

Jon's 'organic and participant led style' had secured his position on the project and his openness to the direction of the group allowed the group freedom to explore their own creative ideas. Jon supported the development of conceptual thought within the group and was able to offer his own experiences of exhibiting installation pieces. Jon took on board the ideas of the group and tried to accommodate these into the final exhibitions.

From the point of first contact, Lucy's role as the gatekeeper of the group was apparent. She knew many of the members and was a friendly and familiar face as well as a knowledgeable arts tutor; because of her familiarity with group members, she was able to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of member's interests, skills and ways of working. Lucy consistently encouraged discussions and group working in a very considerate manner; she has a clear

skill for project management. Her passion to protect and support the needs of members was evident in every discussion; Lucy is a testament to work which takes place at the Old Fire Station.

Lucy has got members best interests at heart and sort of a pursuit of excellent, you know for something that means something, rather than just paying lip service (Jon Lockhart)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to link the characteristics of external collaborators to the most suited community projects.
- Use the status of the Ashmolean Museum to promote links with community projects.
- Use the credibility of the museum to tackle preconceptions of marginalised groups.
- Offer 'less academic' and more 'accessible' museum based tours.
- Consider offering arts-based evening sessions to community groups.
- Continue to build upon the relationship between the Ashmolean Museum and the work of the Old Fire Station and the CRISIS charity group.

APPENDIX C

DATE	AUDIENCE	ACTIVITY	NUMBERS PARTICIPATING
Jan - July 2016	Schools	<p>'Take One... Turner' taught gallery session for Key Stage 1 & 2.</p> <p>Using painting as springboard for cross-curricular learning.</p>	<p>Approx 365 children from 7 schools have enjoyed 'Take One... Turner's High Street' sessions at the Museum.</p> <p>741 downloads of Take One... teacher's notes since September 2015.</p> <p>131 downloads of Focus on Perspective notes for secondary teachers since Feb 2016</p>
Jan - Oct 2016	Adults (What's On programme)	<p>Included in Sketchbook course led by Amanda Beck (May)</p> <p>Session for Visually Impaired People (October)</p> <p>BSL interpreted tour (October)</p>	<p>10 people attended Sketchbooks course</p> <p>Estimate 15 people will attend VIP session</p> <p>Estimate 10 people will attend VIP session</p>
Jan - Mar 2016	<p>Adults</p> <p>Course for adults with learning disabilities resulting in ASDAN qualification (Oxfordshire County Council)</p>	<p>Turner's Oxford High Street Project with Adults with Learning Disabilities, for their ASDAN Qualification.</p> <p>Learners spent 3 weeks learning techniques and studying other works by Turner in order to make their own version of the painting.</p>	7 adults participated

April 2016	Families Art Weeks: Noisy collage	Working with artist Francesca Shakespeare family visitors created two huge collages inspired by Turner's 'High St' during these holiday workshops. Children enjoyed layering their own artwork onto a reproduction of Turner's painting to represent Oxford 'Then', and onto a recent photo of the High St by David Fisher to show Oxford 'Now'. Families were also invited to contribute sounds and stories linked to details within the collages, and make their own 'noisy collage' using the app 'Talking Pictures'.	266 family visitors over 2 days (151 children / 115 adults)
24 May – 11 July 2016	Community exhibition Art Weeks: Noisy collage	Display of Turner inspired collages and 'Talking Pictures' versions on the iPads from Easter holidays drop in.	Not recorded
April – June 2016	Young People Turner's High Street –exploring a masterpiece in 3 media	Project with students from Oxford Spires Academy that involved putting questions to curators, visiting the Print Room to see other works by Turner, walking the High Street and visiting Queen's College, 3D printing and a session with artist Jon Lockhart. 12 students achieved a Discover Arts Award working on this project. Project blog: http://www.ashmolean.org/ashwpress/turnersoxford/	14 Year 9 students 4 Sixth Formers
April – June 2016	Community outreach My Oxford (Oxfordshire Adult Learning)	Adults with learning disabilities/autism worked with local artist Dionne Freeman to experiment with different techniques and approaches including collage, photography, paint application, colour theory, pattern and structure.	5 adults

April – June 2016	Community outreach Piercing the Sky (Crisis)	Artist led project with Crisis (homeless people) – artwork to be displayed as part of National Art in Crisis event	9 consistent attendees across the course, with others dropping in and out
May – July 2016	Community outreach 'I Love the High St' (care homes and day centres in Oxfordshire)	Groups of older people participated in community reminiscence sessions - 5 were interviewed to create a short film about their memories of Oxford High St (Youtube: https://youtu.be/uMFvBf0Q0Ss)	Total 46 people (some repeats) 35 in outreach sessions, 5 on filming day and 6 at the launch
Thursday 21 & 28 July 2016	Community outreach Art in Crisis Member tours	Following training with the Joint Museums Volunteer Service and Ashmolean curators, Crisis members led public tours of the Western Art galleries bringing their perspectives to Turner and his contemporaries during Art in Crisis fortnight.	3 Crisis members led public tours. Each tour attracted approximately 25 people
Wednesday 27 & Thursday 28 July 2016	Families Turner's Oxford	Working with artist Amanda Beck family visitors created small 3D versions of the High Street. Throughout the afternoons they also enjoyed collaborating on a large scale 3D recreation of the High Street, populating the scene with lots of pop up Turners of all sizes. Parents and children also enjoyed making, decorating and signing cobbles to place on the installation, with some dressing up to pose as part of the scene.	233 family visitors over 2 days (137 children / 96 adults)
18 July – September 30 2016	Community exhibition Alternative Views of the High Street	Turner inspired work created by 3 community groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Piercing the Sky', Crisis - My Oxford', Oxfordshire Adult Learning - 'I Love the High St' film, care homes and day centres in Oxfordshire 	Not recorded

<p>Tues – Fridays</p> <p>Summer holidays 2016</p>	<p>Families</p> <p>Turner Activity Trolley</p>	<p>A pilot to test out new ways of delivering interactive elements in the galleries encouraging children to playfully explore Turners 'High St' through art activities, a trail, art books, puzzles and dressing up.</p>	<p>Approximately 180 children / 120 adults</p>
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