

# Getting involved in arts and culture:

People with Learning Disabilities and their access to mainstream cultural activity



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# Introduction

## Arts and culture: what we do and how we live in our local community.



Getting involved in arts and culture is important for people's health and wellbeing.

Arts and Culture can help people to:

- feel part of the community
- make friends with people
- achieve and learn new things

People with learning disabilities don't have equal health and healthcare.

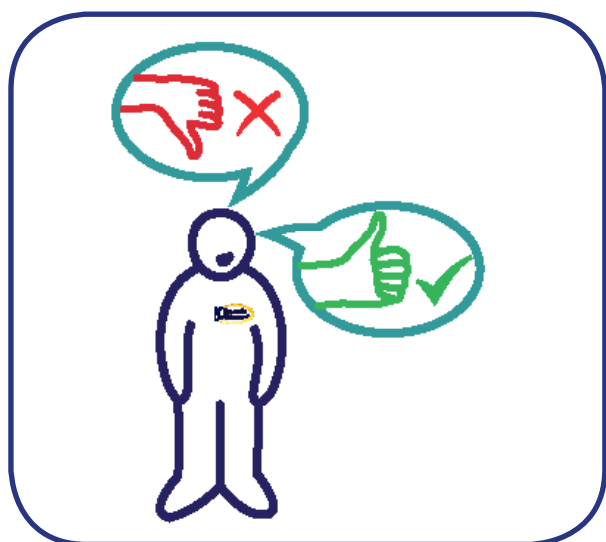
It can be hard for people with learning disabilities to get involved in arts and culture.



Reach is a speaking up group for adults with learning disabilities in Stoke-on-Trent and part of Asist Advocacy Services.

In 2017 Reach Members joined SoTogether CAN (Community Advisory Network) to speak up about arts, culture and community in Stoke-on-Trent.

Reach Members said it is harder for them to join in arts, culture and their local community.



Peer Research is people with disabilities asking other people with disabilities about their lives.

10 Reach Members had training to be Peer Researchers for Staffordshire University.

The Peer Researchers asked 82 people with disabilities what stops them from getting involved in arts, culture and community.

The Peer Researchers also asked people what would help them to get more involved.

# What the Peer Researchers found out

The bigger the circle the more times people used these words:

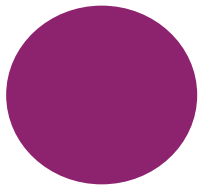
## What does culture mean to you and what activities do you do?



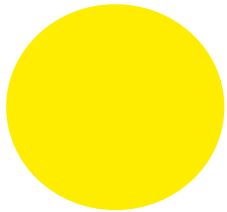
Art course \* Photography \* Peace and quiet \* Hospital \* Don't know



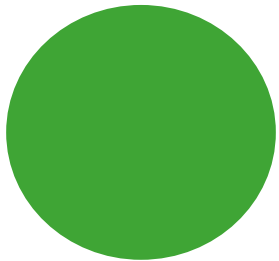
TV \* Christmas \* Painting \* College \* Work \* Museum



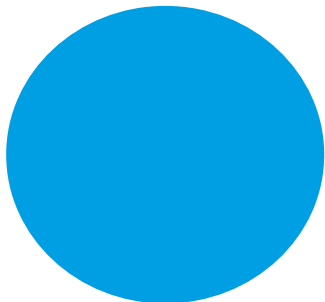
Dancing \* Library \* Art \* Pub \* Holidays \* Bingo



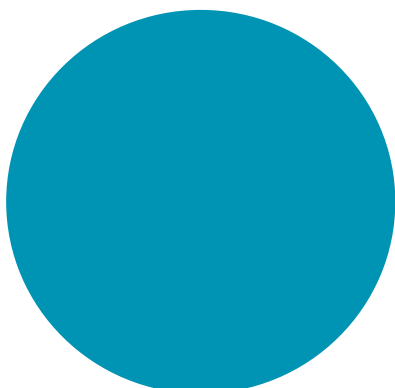
Computers \* Equality \* Gardening \* Drama \* A bit of everything



Famous people \* Films \* Games \* Independence + Support



Theatre \* Music \* History \* Heritage \* Crafts \* Local day trips



Being part of the community \* Environment \*

Food \* Shopping \* Sport + Exercise \* Faith

# What stops people from getting involved in arts, culture and community?



**Transport** can be a problem because:

- people don't usually drive or own a car
- specialist transport can be expensive
- public transport can be unreliable
- the cost of transport can make events expensive and people have bills to pay

Not having **support** can be a problem:

- if people need support to go out
- if people don't feel safe on their own
- because of the cost of additional tickets

\* If people are not **in control** of their own money they cannot always choose to spend it on arts, culture and events.



The total **cost** of event tickets, paying for carers tickets and refreshments can be too much for some people who have lost their benefits or have had benefits cut.

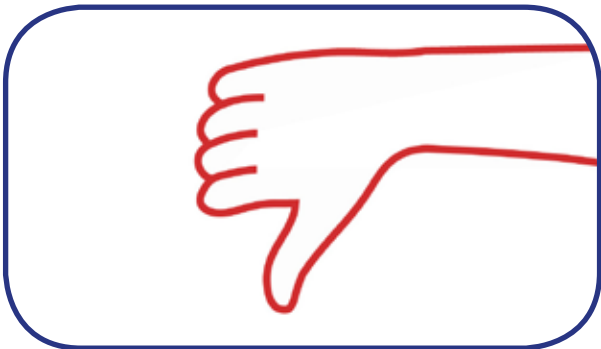
Physical **accessibility** and worrying about getting out and about at events can stop some people from attending or taking part.

People often need to plan and make arrangements in advance with an event organiser if they are using a wheelchair.

People need to feel included, welcome and understood by people organising events.

**Other things** can stop people from getting involved in arts, culture and community:

- venues and activities that are new
- information about events is not clear
- people do not feel an event or activity is meant for them, they do not feel invited.



# What can help people to get more involved in arts, culture and community?



Make sure arts, culture and activities include everyone by inviting people to:

- help plan events and activities
- try new things out before a big event
- join in, take part and enjoy!



Tell people about activities and **advertise** events in different ways by

- using clear words and pictures
- talking to people and groups
- offer sessions people can try for free



Make sure activities and events are held in **accessible** places:

- accessible toilets and Changing Places for people who need hoists
- well trained staff and quiet spaces for people who need time out
- some free tickets for carers and staff if people need someone to go with them



**Peer Researchers learned** that people with learning disabilities need more opportunities and support to get involved in arts, culture and the community.



By getting involved in this Peer Research people were able to **share their expertise** and experiences about art, culture and community.

**People with learning disabilities should have a big part in shaping art, culture and community in Stoke-on-Trent.**

**What can you do to make this happen?**

# Reach Gallery



# Reach Gallery





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