

Arts Council of Northern Ireland



LOTTERY FUNDED

A Decade On

Arts & Older People Programme

Ten years combatting
poverty, loneliness and
isolation through the arts

SUMMARY



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Project supported by the PHA

**The Baring
Foundation**

About the programme

The Arts & Older People Programme, developed by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland in partnership with the Public Health Agency and The Baring Foundation, has been running successfully throughout Northern Ireland since 2010. The programme aims to combat the rising incidence of poverty, isolation and loneliness amongst older people, using participation in the arts as a vehicle for social development change.

The arts are widely recognised for their effectiveness in reducing isolation and loneliness, factors which are known to have a significant impact on physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and even mortality.

Arts & Older People projects are led by trained professional artists and participants are encouraged to contribute fully to the planning process. Participants attend free of charge and transport is provided where required.

What we've achieved so far



28,000

older people participated in arts activities



£2m

invested in increasing opportunities for older people to engage in the arts



150

artist-led projects successfully delivered

Improving health & mental wellbeing

Independent research identifies notable impacts on participants, male and female, living in urban and rural areas, and living in deprived areas, including:



improved health and mental wellbeing

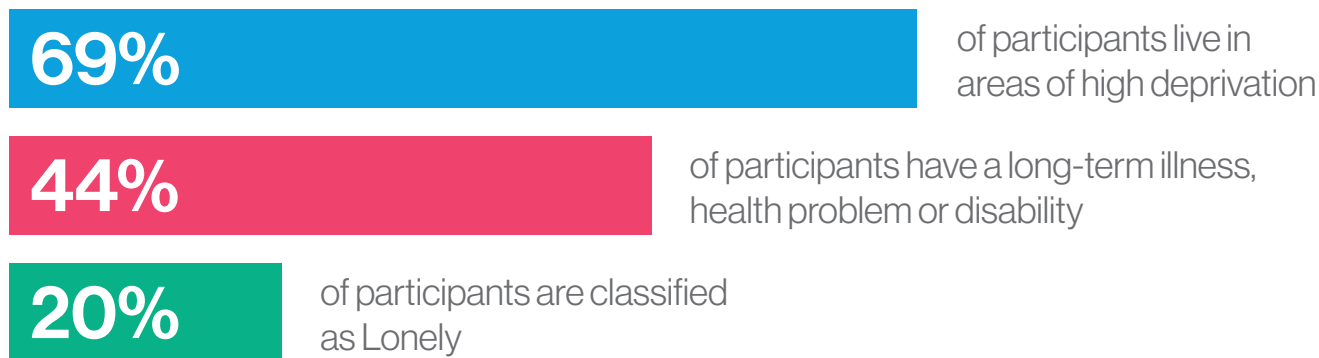


decreased levels of loneliness



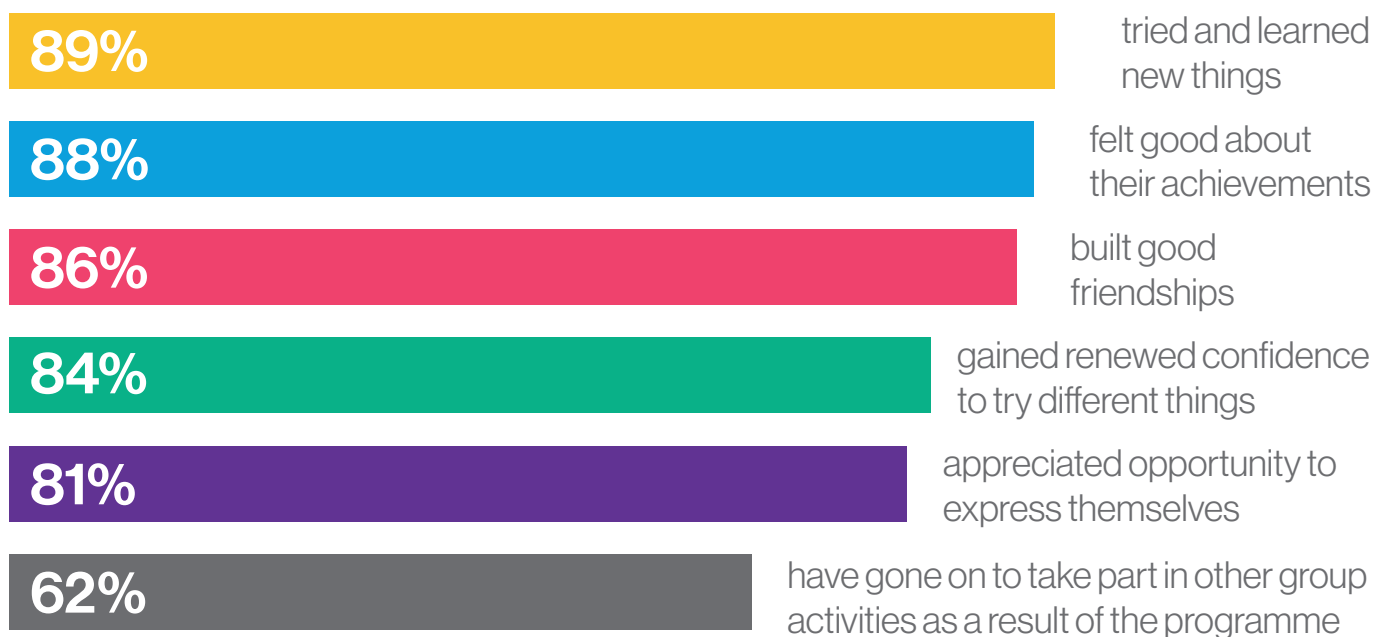
increased enjoyment of life

About the participants



Tackling isolation & loneliness

Participants say they felt motivated to join an Arts & Older People project for a better social life, companionship, to try something different and to learn new skills.



Changing perceptions of the arts

Many participants had not previously engaged in the arts because of a [mis]perception that the arts are highbrow and “not for me”. After participating on an Arts & Older People project:



Additional benefits



Volunteers identified a range of benefits associated with volunteering on the programme:

greater awareness of older people's needs
learning new skills
improved confidence



Audiences attending Arts & Older People events have been impressed on many levels:

99% rated the project event they attended as very good/good

65% said they had become much more aware of the issues faced by older people

72% said the project event they attended made them think more positively about older people



Artists working on Arts & Older People projects benefitted professionally:



- 50% said the project greatly increased their knowledge of older people's social issues
- 75% said the project contributed significantly to their artistic development
- 100% said they would be interested in working with older people again

Research conducted by ARK in November 2019

Full Report and Executive Summary:

<http://artscouncil-ni.org/the-arts/participatory-arts1/arts-and-older-people>

Further information from: info@artscouncil-ni.org

www.artscouncil-ni.org

Published: February 2020