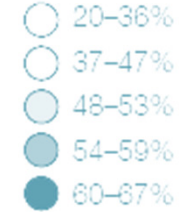
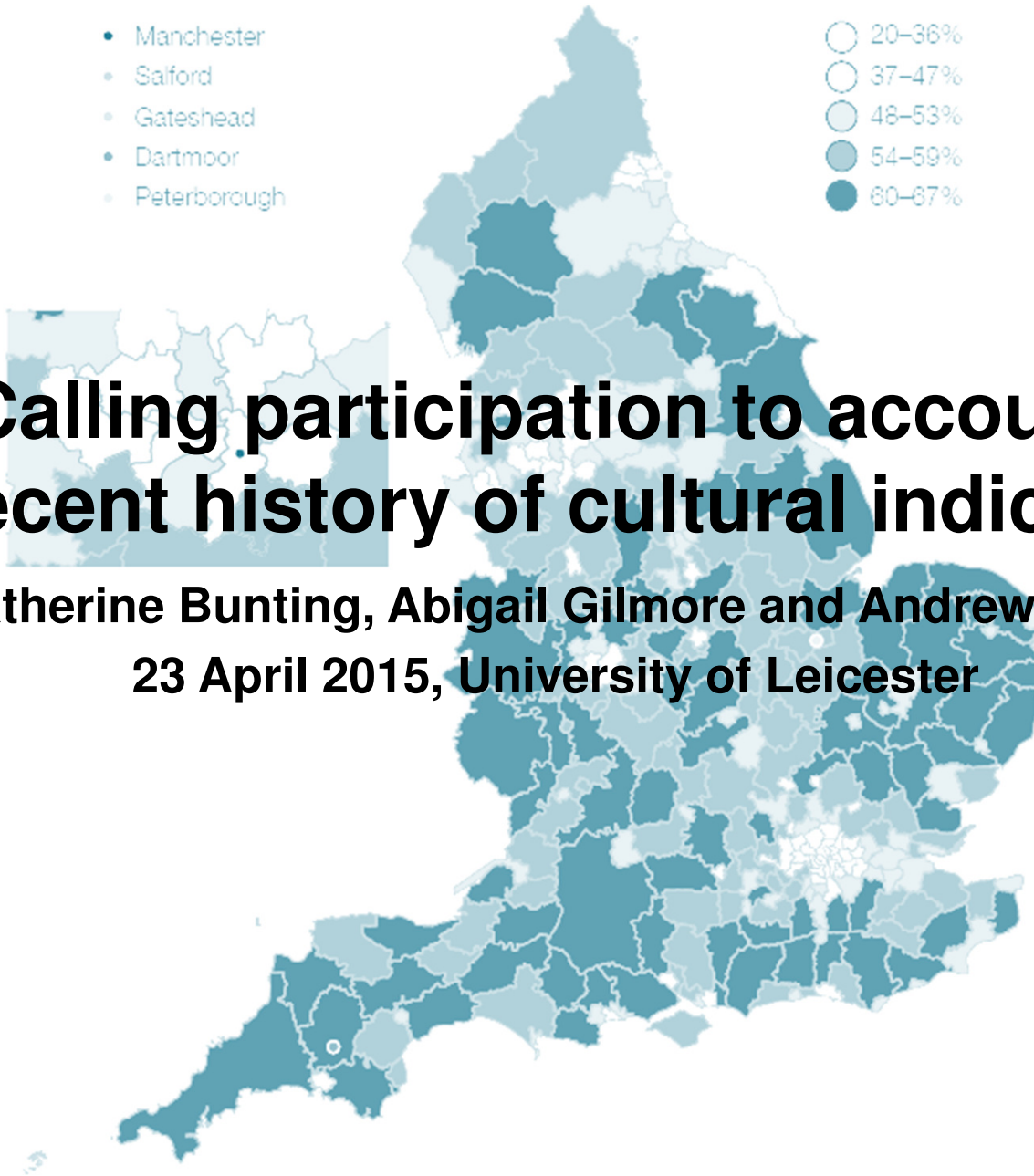


- Manchester
- Salford
- Gateshead
- Dartmoor
- Peterborough



Calling participation to account: a recent history of cultural indicators

Catherine Bunting, Abigail Gilmore and Andrew Miles
23 April 2015, University of Leicester



Social Life of Methods

- Proliferation of social research methods in recent decades
- Multiplication, distribution and innovation – beyond the university and government agencies
- But what do methods do?
 - Not neutral devices but both shape and are shaped by the social world
- Need to be historically located
 - Not just a ‘toolkit’ to be picked up and put down but culturally and politically loaded
- Need to ask
 - how the knowledge they produce can be validated
 - how and with what consequences it travels between fields and communities of practice
 - what is made invisible as well as visible in the process

‘Seeing Like a Survey’

- Sample survey a staple of modern social science
- Crucial part of an objective and ‘robust’ armoury for establishing probable cause and effect
- But actually a creative tool of social and political and social engineering
- Makes a set of assumptions about relationship between attitudes, actions, subjectivities, spaces – enacting identities and collectivities
- Construction and operation reflects institutional histories, processes and tensions

Origins of 'Taking Part': evidence-based policy and PSA targets

- Labour victory in 1997: creation of DCMS and attempts to establish a clear relationship between cultural policy, funding, delivery and outcomes
- Public Service Agreements (PSAs) introduced as a mechanism by which Labour could drive departments to deliver improvements in public services
- PSA 2 (2003-6) included a target to increase arts attendance and participation, measured by the Arts Council through an Omnibus survey
 - definition of 'arts' based on categories included in the Target Group Index survey since 1986/87; for PSA2, TGI categories were broadened to include participation in arts activities as well as attendance at arts events
- For PSA3, DCMS were keen to encourage a cross-sector approach to measurement to ensure consistency and robustness
- DCMS conceived and put forward the Taking Part concept, and led the development of the survey in partnership with its key NDPBs

Negotiating the Taking Part arts categories

- Taking Part made the question of what did and didn't constitute 'the arts' more explicit, and more political
 - development of arts categories for Taking Part caught up with negotiating content of PSA3
- Process of agreeing a definition of 'the arts' for PSA3/Taking Part was led by Arts Council and DCMS research teams, with input from policy colleagues; The Arts Council and – to some extent – DCMS felt that the definition of 'the arts' used for PSA2 was too narrow, and were keen to broaden the list for PSA3, particularly by adding more popular and informal activities
- At the same time, there was a desire to maintain consistency with the original TGI categories; several of today's Taking Part arts categories can be traced back decades to this long-running commercial survey
- ultimately Treasury the final arbiter of what was in and what was out

A 'meaningful definition' of the arts?

- Motivations to encompass a wider range of art forms for PSA3 were mixed:
 - partly a desire for the PSA target to represent an inclusive, contemporary concept of the arts
 - reflected the Arts Council's strategic development in previously neglected areas such as carnival
 - also a more cynical recognition that increases in arts attendance and participation would be hard to achieve if the scope of the target was limited to more traditional forms
- HMT took a more conservative line on what the definition should include:
 - an ideological stance on what constituted valuable and legitimate artistic forms...or a pragmatic wish to focus the target on art forms that received the bulk of public money?
- Real sticking points were activities such as carnival, street arts and circus - today they form part of the standard set of Taking Part arts categories, but in 2006 HMT refused to include them within the definition of PSA3
- DCMS push to match Taking Part arts categories to PSA3 exactly – but the Arts Council negotiated to include some additional activities for research purposes (even if they weren't considered worthy or legitimate or relevant enough to be in the official target)

Reflections on the process

- Process of negotiating arts categories for PSA3/Taking Part characterised by a high degree of confusion – definitions developed organically, with little documentation of why and when particular decisions were made
- Technical staff at the Arts Council, DCMS and HMT led the process and played a dominant role, representing (or second-guessing) the values and policy positions of their organisations while managing the practical challenges of survey design
- In fact overall it was a technical rather than strategic debate:
 - little discussion of what DCMS and the Arts Council might have to do differently in order to achieve particular targets
 - little consideration of the extent to which the Arts Council and its funded organisations were able to influence arts engagement in the wider population
 - no direct repercussions for either the Arts Council or DCMS when targets were not met
- PSA targets – and indeed any kind of cultural policy targets – should perhaps be seen as symbols to be interpreted, rather than the logical conclusion of a coherent policy process

Regional and local cultural strategies

- Regionalism of New Labour led to infrastructures for performance management, coordination and measurement at regional level and below (with local authorities, tourism boards, local strategic partnerships) - Regional Development Agencies, Regional Cultural Consortiums and Regional Cultural Observatories (short-lived part of story which ended in the 'Hodge review' in 2008)
- Local Cultural Strategies - 'strongly recommended' by DCMS in 1999 but 'subsumed' into Community Strategies (a requirement) in 2001; involved scoping of local activities and assets, to establish priorities against local policy objectives
- From PAT10 report (1999) which stated the benefits of positive activities for social impacts (although largely without evidence) policy interest in participation became less about market research, audience development, and customer satisfaction and more about 'engagement' and 'active participation'
- With increasing instrumentalism, participation became the proxy for culture's extrinsic values: e.g. regeneration, health & wellbeing, community, 'positive activities'
- Cultural participation indicators were now a crucial key aspect of service performance management as provide measure for service and policy reach

Problems with local evidence & indicator envy

- Taking Part cross-sector household survey which was driven by national agencies; too costly to boost sample and too complicated to adapt methodology for data which could represent local level participation rates
- As the only statutory service (for unitary authorities) libraries data and indicators existed;
- Department of Health recognised health benefits principle of measurable increased participation in sport and physical exercise leading to an indicator - (five times 20 minutes)
- Sport England developed Active People telephone survey which provided data on multiple sports and physical recreation types at local level (and below) and brought in first market segmentation tool
- However measures (and data) still needed for Local Improvement Tools and Local Area Agreements for arts, heritage and culture
- Lack of local arts indicators led to a 'methodological arms race' (Matarasso) for policy appraisal

National cultural indicators

National Indicators for sports, libraries, museums and the arts were established as part of national set derived from Public Service Agreements and Departments' Strategic Objectives (DSOs) through the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. They were defined through consultation by Department for Communities and Local Government so that the delivery of central government objectives could be measured locally. But:

- There were no data sources for the cultural NIs when first agreed
- NI measure for arts engagement merged attendance and participation
- To provide data, module added to the Active People telephone survey for arts engagement museums
- All National Indicators were scrapped in 2010 as one of the first directives of the coalition government

Active People data provided the first means to make visible arts participation rates below the regional level (to local authority level) in a standardised way

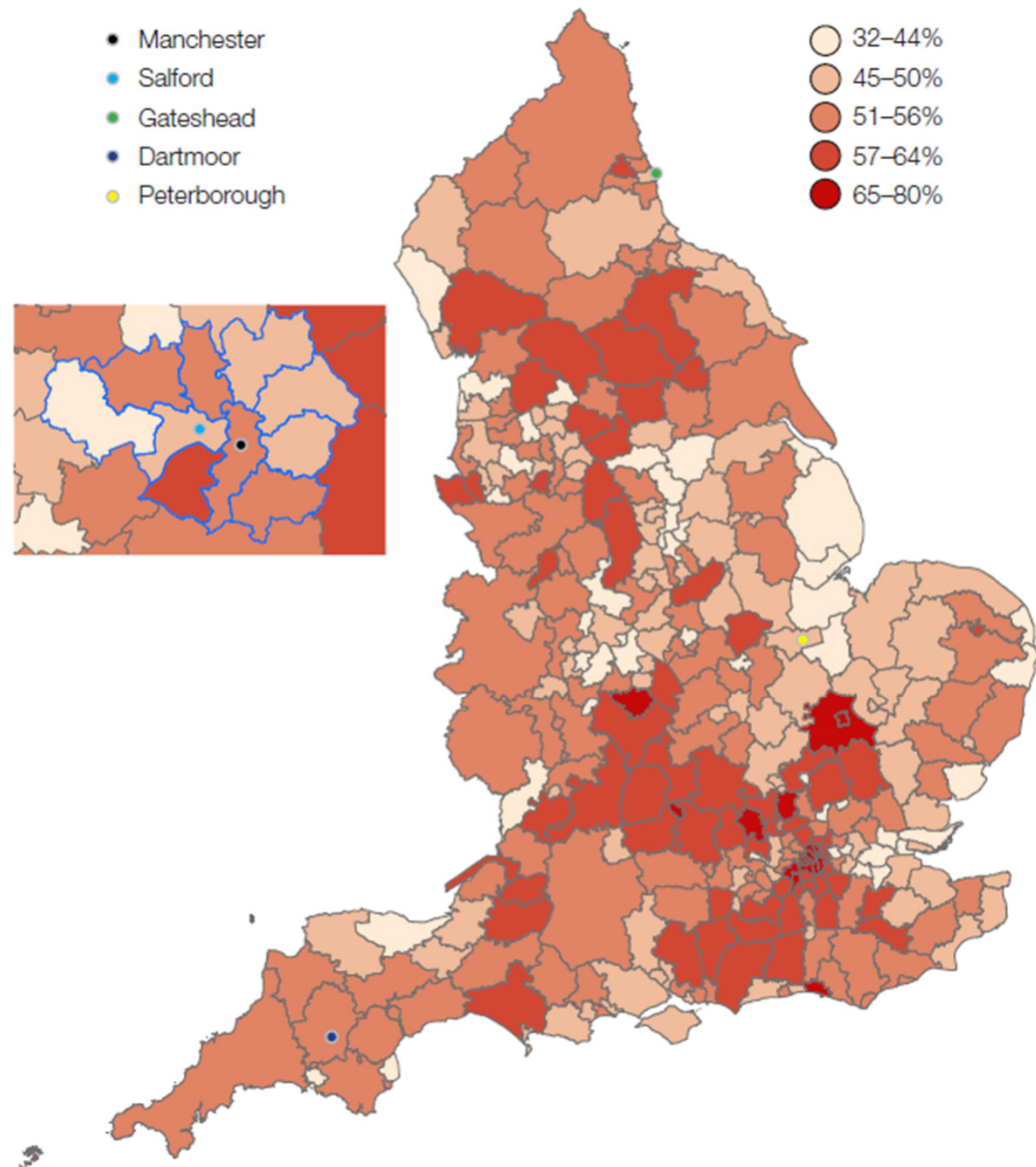
However it used a different methodology, providing cruder measures than Taking Part and didn't differentiate between different art forms

Legacy of the NIs

- Along with the development of the CASE local area profiling tool by the same DCMS group that developed Taking Part, the mapping of Active People data provided the first comprehensive picture of areas of 'low engagement' or 'Coldspots'
- Increasing use of market segmentation tools, such as Audience Insight, also highlighted segments of population who were likely to have 'low levels' of cultural engagement
- These tools were used to target investment to address deficits or to allocate funds to where policies were most likely to succeed
- For example, Arts Council England's *Creative People and Places* used Active People to identify areas with lower than average rates of engagement, who could apply for funding to use different methods to increase participation in the arts
- UEP approach to participation and assets mapping aims to unpick different data sources and uses, locally and nationally, to see beyond the survey and the 'deficit' model through mixed methods research which is self-consciously aware of the social life of methods

Active People asked: What proportions of local population have...

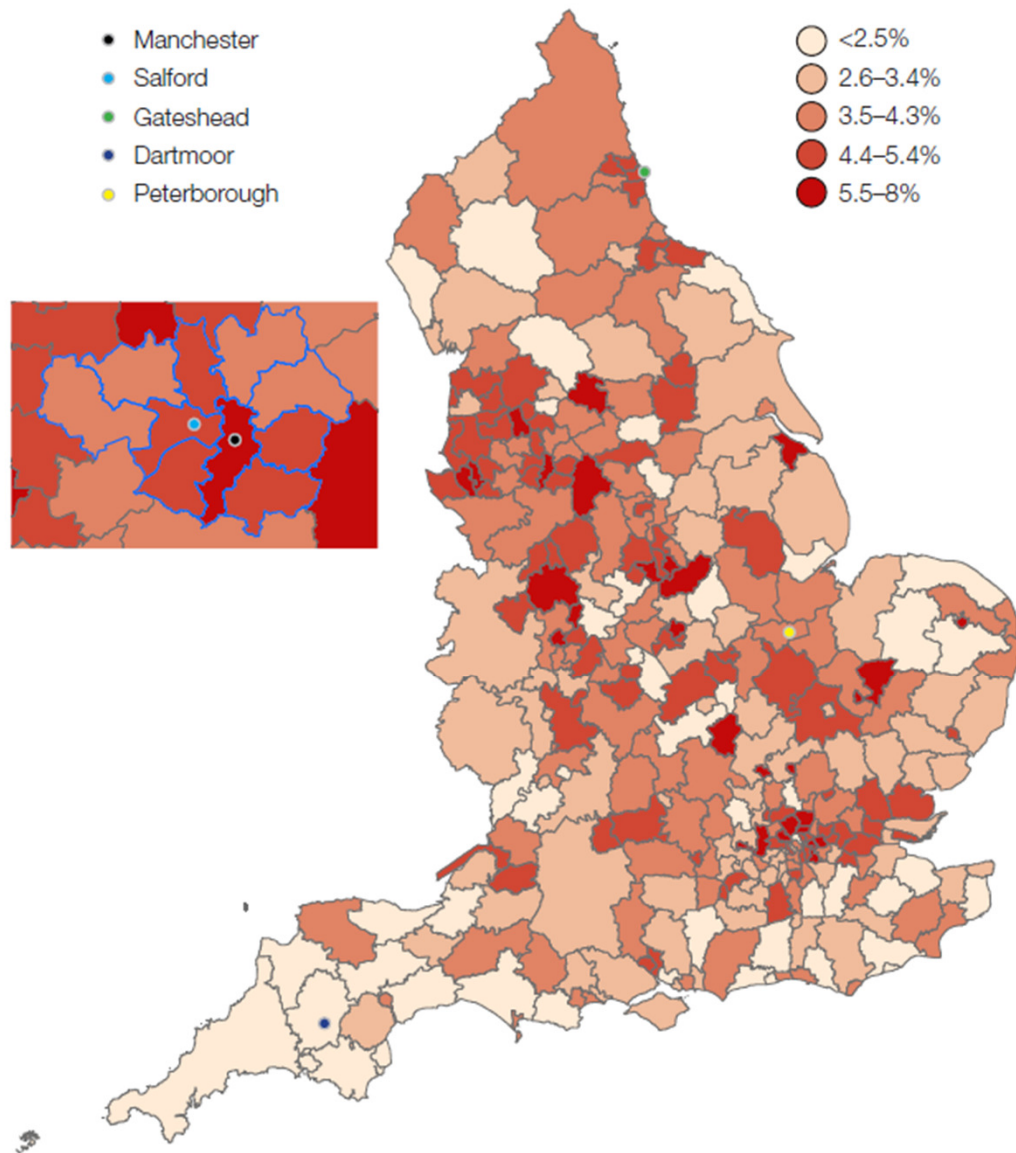
- **visited museums and galleries** at least once *in the last twelve months*;
- **been to any creative, theatrical, artistic or musical events** *in the last twelve months* and how often they have attended;
- **done any creative, artistic, theatrical or musical activities** *in the last twelve months*?



Museum and gallery visits

Percentages represent fractions of respondents in each local authority responding “yes” to “During the last 12 months, have you attended a museum or gallery at least once?”

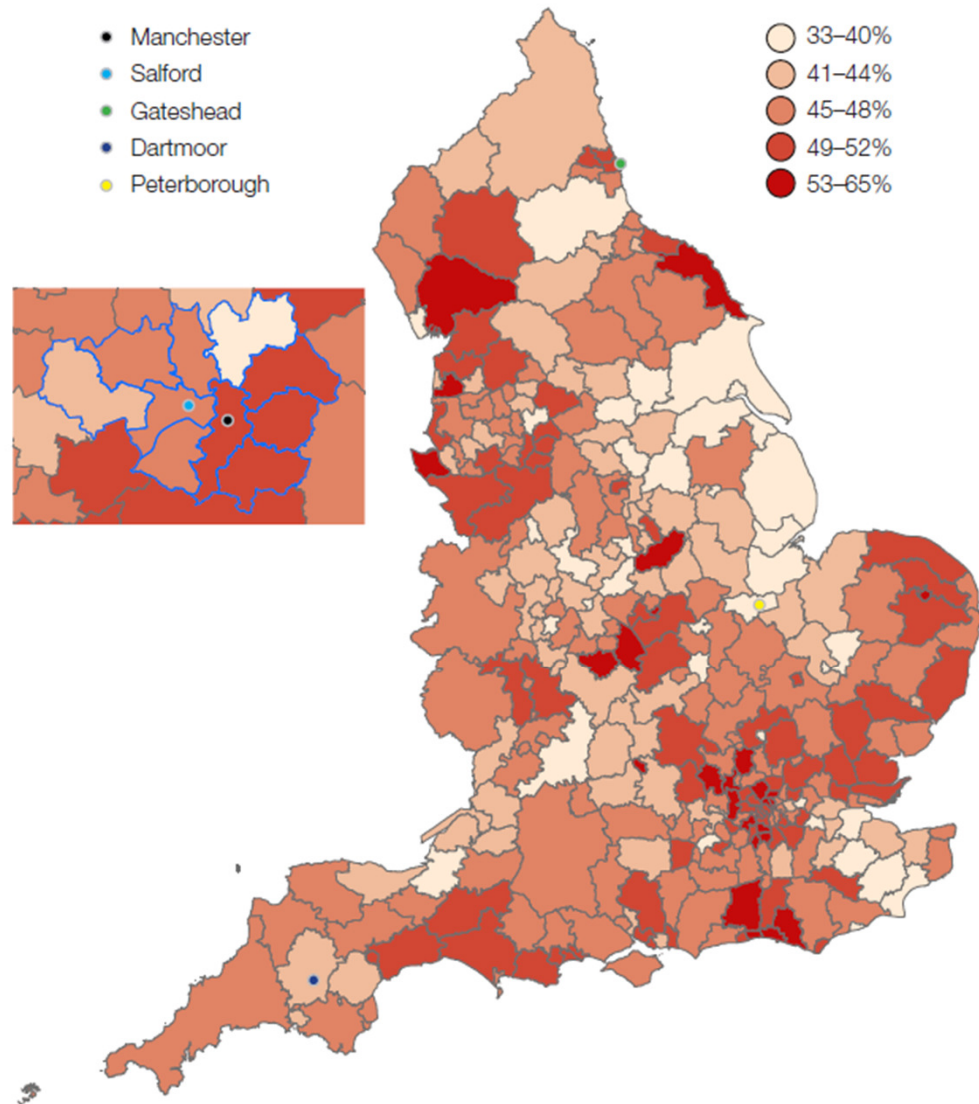
Source: Active People Survey 4, data collected 2009–2010



Football

Percentages represent fractions of respondents in each local authority reporting that they'd played football in the preceding four weeks

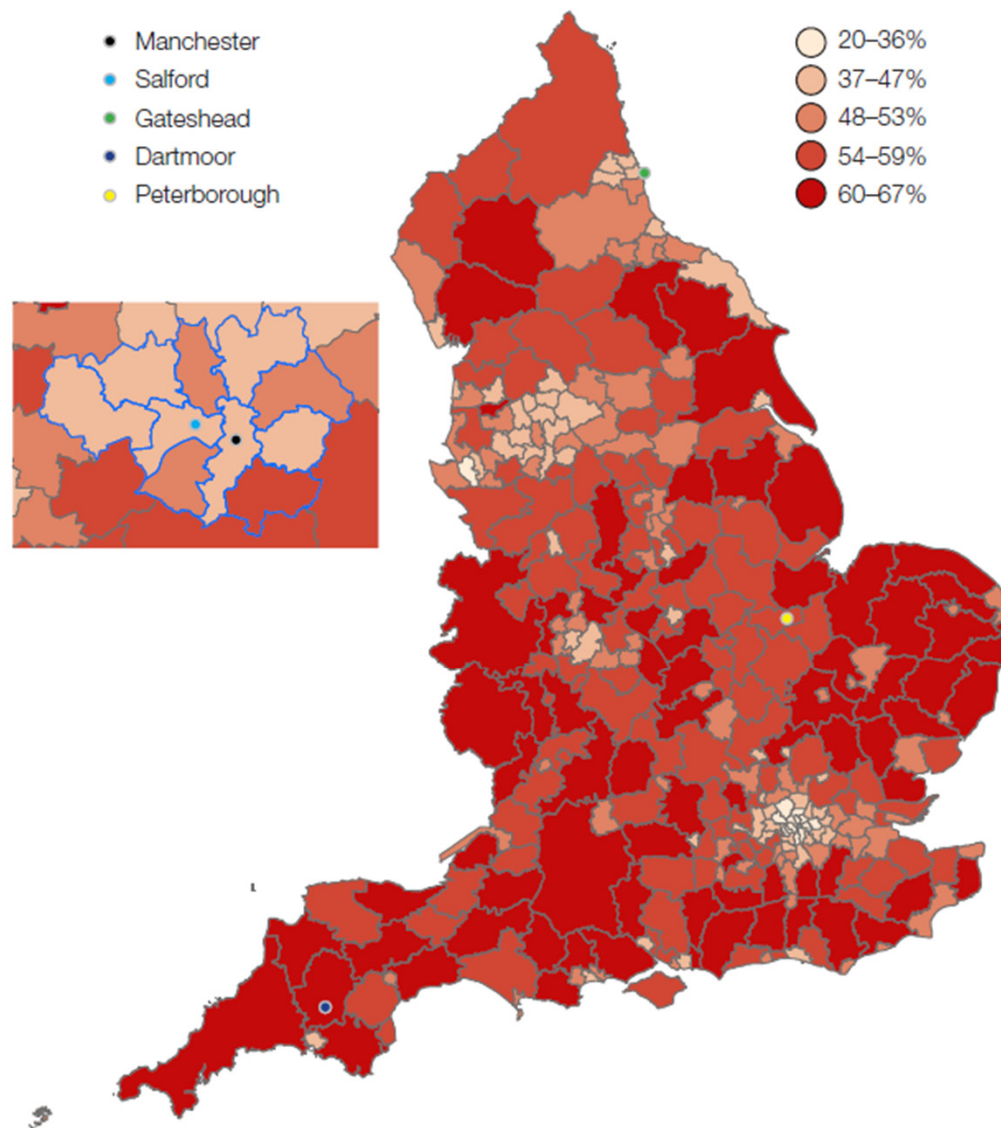
Source: Active People Survey 4, data collected 2009–2010



Library visits

Percentages represent fractions of respondents in each local authority responding “yes” to “During the last 12 months, have you used a public library service at least once?”

Source: Active People Survey 4, data collected 2009–2010



Gardening

Percentages represent fractions of respondents in each local authority reporting that they'd done gardening in the preceding four weeks

Source: Active People Survey 4, data collected 2009–2010

PSA target 2 (2003–06): arts participation and attendance

- To increase the proportion of people from priority groups who participate in at least two different arts activities a year by 2%
- To increase the proportion of people from priority groups who attend at least two arts events a year by 3%

Arts activities defined as:

- writing any stories, plays or poetry
- doing any ballet or other dance
- playing a musical instrument for own pleasure
- writing or composing a piece of music
- performing or rehearsing in a play or drama
- painting, drawing, print making or sculpture
- crafts

Arts events defined as:

- play or drama
- exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture
- event connected with literature
- performance of opera/opera
- classical music concert
- jazz concert
- live dance, including ballet, contemporary dance, African people's dance, South Asian dance
- craft exhibition

- People from priority groups were defined as adults aged 20 and over who are disabled, from Black and minority ethnic groups or from lower socio-economic groups

PSA target 3 (2005–08): arts participation and attendance

Arts activities now defined as:

- ballet
- other dance (not for fitness)
- singing to an audience or rehearse for a performance (not karaoke)
- playing a musical instrument to an audience or rehearse for a performance
- playing a musical instrument for your own pleasure
- writing music
- rehearsing or performing in play/drama
- rehearsing or performing in opera/opera
- painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture
- photography as an artistic activity
- making films or videos as an artistic activity
- using a computer to create original artworks or animation
- textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting
- wood crafts such as wood turning, carving or furniture making
- other crafts such as calligraphy, pottery or jewellery making
- writing any stories or plays
- writing any poetry

Arts events now defined as:

- exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture
- event which includes video or electronic art
- culturally-specific festival (for example Mela, Baisakhi, Navratri)
- play/drama
- other theatre performance (for example musical, pantomime)
- opera/opera
- classical music performance
- jazz performance
- other live music event
- Ballet
- contemporary dance
- African people's dance or South Asian and Chinese dance
- other live dance events

Taking Part arts participation activities 2014/15

1. Ballet
2. Other dance (for fitness)
3. Other dance (not for fitness).
4. Sang to an audience or rehearsed for a performance (not karaoke)
5. Played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearsed for a performance
6. Played a musical instrument for your own pleasure
7. Written music
8. Rehearsed or performed in a play / drama
9. Rehearsed or performed in an opera / operetta or musical theatre
10. Taken part in a carnival
11. Taken part in street arts
12. Learned or practised circus skills
13. Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture
14. Photography as an artistic activity
15. Made films or videos as an artistic activity
16. Used a computer to create original artworks or animation
17. Textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting
18. Wood crafts such as wood turning, carving or furniture making
19. Other crafts such as calligraphy, pottery or jewellery for yourself
20. Bought any original works of art for yourself
21. Bought any original / handmade crafts such as pottery or jewellery for yourself
22. Read for pleasure (not newspapers, magazines or comics)
23. Bought a novel or book of stories, poetry or plays for yourself
24. Written any stories or plays
25. Written any poetry
26. Created a video or computer game

Taking Part arts attendance activities 2014/15

1. Film at a cinema or other venue
2. Exhibition or collection of art, photography or sculpture
3. Craft exhibition (not crafts market)
4. Event which included video or electronic art
5. Event connected with books or writing
6. Street arts (art in everyday surroundings like parks, streets or shopping centres)
7. A public art display or installation
8. Circus (not animals)
9. Carnival
10. Culturally specific festival (for example, Mela, Baisakhi, Navrati)
11. Play / drama
12. Pantomime
13. Musical
14. Opera / operetta
15. Classical music performance
16. Jazz performance
17. Other live music event
18. Ballet
19. Contemporary dance
20. African people's dance or South Asian and Chinese dance
21. Other live dance event