

Executive Summary

The 'Creative Health in Bromley' initiative is a transformative programme designed to enhance health and wellbeing through engagement in creative activities. This approach is backed by extensive research demonstrating its effectiveness in reducing health inequalities, fostering social connections, and improving overall quality of life. Aligned with Bromley Council's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2024-2029) [Bromley JointHealthAndWellbeingStrategy 2024-2029](#) and Tackling Loneliness Strategy (2022-2026) [Tackling Loneliness: A strategy for Bromley 2022 to 2026](#), this initiative directly supports the borough's strategic objectives of improving community wellbeing and reducing social isolation.

By embedding arts, creativity, and culture within public health frameworks, 'Creative Health in Bromley' ensures a holistic, accessible, and sustainable approach to community health and wellbeing.

Key Highlights

- **Funding Opportunities:** The programme is positioned to secure funding to support its expansion and sustainability, ensuring long-term benefits for residents and service providers.
- **Proven Impact:** Research and local surveys confirm the positive effects of creative engagement, with participants reporting enhanced wellbeing, increased social connectivity, and reduced loneliness.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Collaboration with key borough stakeholders—including the NHS, Mytime Active, Bromley GP Alliance, and cultural organisations—will amplify the programme's reach and effectiveness.
- **Planned Initiatives:** The team has already taken significant steps, including establishing a 'Creative Health in Bromley Network'. Developing branding, and a dedicated marketing campaign to raise awareness and drive participation is underway.

With a scheduled launch in Spring 2025, 'Creative Health in Bromley' is set to make a lasting impact, reinforcing Bromley as a borough that champions innovation in health and wellbeing, paving the way for a healthier, more connected community.

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What is Creative Health?

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London Arts and Health: Creative Health is a programme of work that **uses creative practice to support people with physical and mental ill health; embracing** performance arts, film, literature, music, crafts, gardening, natural and heritage and digital arts.

Prospects: Creative health can be defined as **creating the conditions and opportunities for arts, creativity and culture to be embedded in** public health.

NHS: Creative health involves **creative approaches and activities that prevent ill-health and promote** health and wellbeing.

Creative Health Havering: is a network of local grassroots community organisations, third sector services and medical professionals **exploring opportunities around social prescribing and the benefit of arts activity for health and wellbeing.**

Arts Council England: By “creative health and wellbeing”, we mean the connection between creativity and the health and quality of people’s lives.

Creative Health Evidence & Research

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing (APPG AHW) was formed in 2014 and aims to improve awareness of the benefits that the arts can bring to health and wellbeing.

[Find out more about the APPG AHW >>](#)

The Inquiry Report, *Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing - Second Edition (2017)*, [Creative Health The Short Report.pdf \(ncch.org.uk\)](#) presented the findings of two years of research, evidence-gathering and discussions with patients, health and social care professionals, artists and arts administrators, academics, people in local government, ministers, other policy-makers and parliamentarians from both Houses of Parliament.

The National Centre for Creative Health [National Centre for Creative Health \(ncch.org.uk\)](#) was formed in response to the Creative Health report. [Introduction-to-Creative-Health-Extract.pdf](#)

Arts Council England published a dedicated [Creative Health & Wellbeing plan](#) in 2023, designed to promote creative health as a fundamental part of living well for individuals, communities and globally.

The Arts Council created a survey for users to complete who had taken part in activities during the Lockdown Period. The report was published in 2021: [Impact of creative & cultural activity during the pandemic on loneliness, isolation & wellbeing](#)

- **Participants who attended a higher number of activities were more likely to report increased satisfaction with life.** As expected, **reports of satisfaction with life increased over longer time periods of participation.** 85.21% of respondents reported high satisfaction scores when involved for over a year.
- **Over three quarters (76.20%) felt that their life had become more worthwhile since becoming involved in an activity** (with length of involvement increasing the proportion of positive responses, rising from 62.35% of those who had been involved for less than a month, up to 81.55% if involved for a year or more).

- **Over four fifths of respondents reported feeling happier** (80.27%), which increased over time, scored at 66.86% for those involved for less than a month, rising to 86.23% of those involved for a year or more.

Summary:

The quantitative data suggests that those who have engaged the most with interventions, and for the longest durations, report greater impacts on their feelings of loneliness and wellbeing. This highlights the need for and potential benefits of ongoing and long-term funding for arts and cultural engagement with marginalised individuals and communities.

Creativity in its various forms is increasingly important in addressing the multiple challenges faced by society.

Rising mental health concerns, an ageing population and recurrent health crisis are conditions that can be relieved through engagement with the arts.

Creative and cultural activity must be viewed by society as a fundamental part of living well for a holistic view of health and wellbeing.

Using performance arts, film, literature, music, crafts, gardening, natural and heritage and digital arts are examples of how to use creative practises to enhance our mental health and wellbeing.

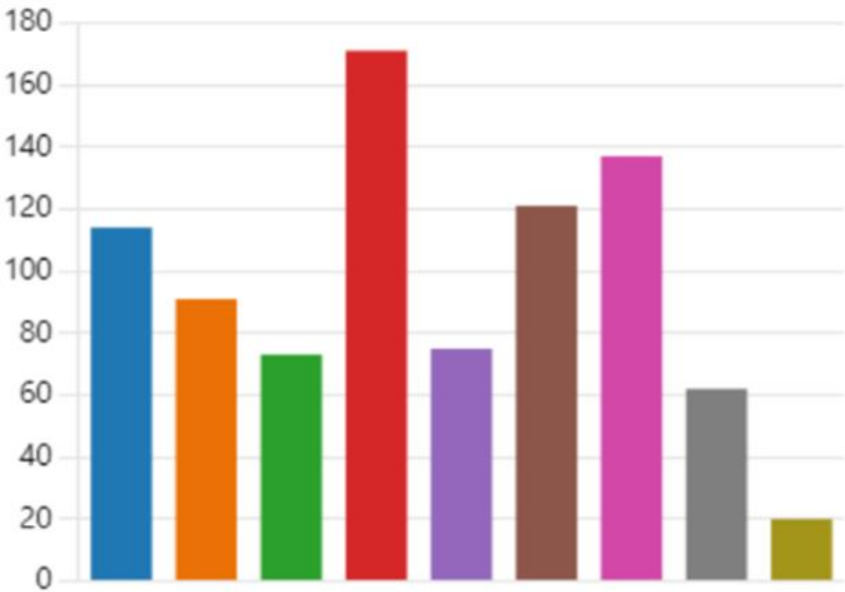
LBB's 'Bringing People Together' Survey 2024 demonstrates how creative, physical and community groups are helping people to feel more connected to the community and reduce loneliness and isolation and improve overall wellbeing. 265 respondents had been participating in a wide variety of groups hosted by Bromley libraries, Age UK, Children and Family Centres and Mytime Active.

How have you been impacted by taking part in a group or activity?

		Overall percentage
 You feel more connected to you...	114	13%
 You feel less alone	91	10%
 You feel less isolated	73	8%
 You have formed new friendships	171	19%
 You have been able to explore a...	75	8%
 Your physical health has improv...	121	17%
 Your mental wellbeing has impr...	137	16%
 You feel more supported	62	7%
 Other	20	2%

The survey responses revealed:

- ✓ Taking part in a group or activity had improved users physical and mental health
- ✓ A 22% increase in social connectivity
- ✓ 59% of users feel less lonely since joining a group or activity



Creative Health in Bromley

How can we implement a Creative Health Programme in Bromley?

Having created an LBB Creative Health team (*Charlotte Ryan-Culture, Amanda Mumford and Anne Clarke-Public Health and Helayna Jenkins-Principal Loneliness Champion*) together with LBB comms team, the team will develop and activate Bromley's Creative Health Programme by:

- Aligning the key objectives of the Creative Health Programme with our Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Tackling Loneliness Strategy aims
- Creating and develop a 'Creative Health in Bromley' Network
- Creating a 'Creative Health in Bromley' branding and logo for Council and partners to use for promotion
- Creating a marketing campaign to signpost residents to the wide-ranging Creative Health offer in the borough
- Creating a dedicated Creative Health webpage on Bromley Council's website
- Engaging key borough partners to further enhance and promote Bromley's Creative Health offer

Key partners to include GLL, Mytime Active, Community Links, Bromley Mencap, One Bromley, Idverde, NHS South-East London ICB, Bromley GP Alliance, Churchill Theatre, Age UK.

Creative Health in Bromley: Current Position

Wednesday 12 Feb 2025 saw colleagues across Integrated Care Board, Local Authority, VCSE & Culture Sector alongside local people from South East London attend an event at the Southbank Centre to ask how creativity can support the reduction of health inequalities locally.

Co-hosted by Greater London Authority and SEL Integrated Care Board's Creative Health Lead, this event aimed to highlight how Integrated Neighbourhood Teams as set out in the Fuller report can be supported via creative solutions.

This event was an opportunity to:

- Make connections and develop cross-sector collaborations with those across our locality who are working to reduce health inequalities in innovative ways.
- Hear directly from local people about the impact creativity has on their health & wellbeing in South East London and celebrate the VCSE & cultural sector champions driving positive change through creativity.
- Learn about the impact Creative Health solutions can have and the next steps required to further utilise creativity in integrated neighbourhood working through cross-borough partnerships and creative commissioning.

After six months of introducing Creative Health to key borough stakeholders, LBB's Creative Health team managed to secure attendance of over 20 Bromley representatives from a range of sectors.

This demonstrates the huge and positive appetite for Creative Health within the borough and LBB's Creative Health team will now utilise this group to form the origin of 'Bromley Creative Health Network'.

Creative Health in Bromley: Next Steps

- Create Creative Health in Bromley Founder Network – Feb 2025
- Schedule first 'CHIB' Network meeting – April 2025
- Develop 'Creative Health in Bromley' branding and logo for providers to brand their activities and groups – April 2025
- Launch dedicated Creative Health webpage on Bromley Council's website – April 2025
- Launch marketing campaign – April 2025
- Plan for launch event – April/May 2025
- Prepare Bromley programme of activity for 'Creativity and Wellbeing Week' [Creativity and Wellbeing Week – Our festival is over for another year but please keep telling us about your events!](#) (19-25 May 2025) – April 2025
- Prepare for and explore available funding opportunities – May 2025
- Explore use of Council assets for Creative Health activation ie. 77 Addington Road, West Wickham Maker Space and Community Room, Lewis House - ongoing

The 'Creative Health in Bromley' Programme is a collaborative Culture team initiative and will sit within the Culture team's programming with the aim to secure available funding in the future to further enhance and develop this programme for both the borough's residents and service providers.

Planned Programme launch Spring 2025

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