

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting
<b>Subject:</b>	The Detectives - Conan Doyle Collection
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	18 November 2022
<b>Report by:</b>	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out to inform the Cabinet Member of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection's first successful year of the £100,000 Arts Council funding application 'The Detectives'. It details the overall project.

**2. Purpose of the report**

- 2.1 To update the Cabinet Member on the details of the Arts Council funded project The Detectives and outcomes achieved so far.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Successful funding of £100,000 was secured in 2021 for a two-year project known as The Detectives from the Arts Council's Library fund, looking at Health and Wellbeing and Culture and Creativity, part of the Universal Libraries Offer, but also many outcomes sit well within Portsmouth's 2040 City Vision.
- 3.2 Volunteers known as Detectives who wished to gain work-based skills who have a disability or learning difficulty, come from a substance misuse or mental health background are given an opportunity to contribute, at their own level, to projects or tasks within a Cultural setting, giving Detectives the skills they request at application stage to realise their ambitions.
- 3.3 Skills are gained by using the Conan Doyle Collection as a resource to design and deliver projects led by the Detectives and overseen by artists, authors or creatives for the wider public, therefore spreading the word to a richly diverse audience about this amazing Collection.

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- 3.4 There has been a Community Development Officer post (22.2 hrs) recruited through this project, Alanna Burchett. Alanna recruits and manages the Detectives, supports them with their daily requirements with us, as well as signposting them after their time with us.
- 3.5 Detectives have mainly been recruited to each project or task individually via The Hive, Portsmouth Job Centre, Abri Housing, Salvation Army, Minstead Trust and others, with the exception to a fantastic relationship with Enableability who have brought small groups along to projects.
- 3.6 To date we have worked with 28 Detectives and showcased the Conan Doyle Collection in a variety of ways to an audience of over 5000 people. In our view this has been a clear demonstration of supporting the City Vision aim of a city with a thriving economy as we have built this project on strong partnerships to develop an excellent skills base with an often marginalised sector of the community.

**4. The Detectives Projects**

- 4.1 There have been four projects completed to date, and three are underway. Each project has held a workshop on Handling Archives, and the content and inspiration has come directly from the Conan Doyle Collection archives, with Detectives directing every project:
- We Shine 2021: *Illusions of Mystery* - Menuhin Theatre, Central Library
  - Art Exhibition - *Imaginarium of Conan Doyle* - Southsea Library
  - Summer of Sherlock Make and Take - All libraries
  - Summer of Sherlock Theatre - Groundlings Theatre
- 4.2 Detectives have had input into writing briefs, they have interviewed and selected four creative professionals to work with, to co-produce the projects and the outcomes.
- 4.3 Detectives have gained a wide range of new skills during their time on each project, from art or craft skills, specific knowledge about the Conan Doyle Collection and how to handle the archives, objects and books within it, health and safety awareness, to arriving on time for workshops, travelling unaided to different locations, gaining confidence and giving people a sense of purpose and meaning.
- 4.4 Detectives are currently working on:

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- Letters from the Archives project
- We Shine 2022
- Part two of the Worldwide Doyle 2022 project

4.5 We believe all the projects delivered to date and those planned for the future demonstrate activity against the following areas of the City Vision:

- *A city rich in culture and creativity*
- *A city of lifelong learning*
- *A green city - living healthy and active lives*

## **5. The Detectives - Individual roles and achievements to date**

5.1 Some Detectives do not wish to work as part of a group, and we have four people who undertake weekly tasks to support the Conan Doyle Collections social media and website pages, deliver a Book of the month Blog on the Conan Doyle Collection website <https://www.visitportsmouth.co.uk/conan-doyle/blog> showcasing the 16,000 books in the collection, and digitally catalogue magazines from the Collection onto Spydus.

5.2 Detectives have progressed in many ways so far:

- One Detective is now on an apprenticeship working as a Health Support Care Worker in Winchester Hospital. " *Without the help from the Detectives I wouldn't of had the confidence in myself to apply*"
- Two Detectives are undertaking research through a developed and deeper interest in the Conan Doyle Collection.
- A Detective who is a quadriplegic wheelchair user has engaged further after the We Shine 2021 event by working on his own presentation, something he has never had the opportunity to do before and he will show this in the Menuhin Theatre to members of the public.
- Another Detective engaged with the We Shine *Illusions of Mystery* event showed an interest in photography during the workshops. He went on a photography course before taking up a three-month placement at Hilsea Stores to photograph and catalogue the objects in the Conan Doyle Collection, supported by a Buddying Volunteer. He now travels to Hilsea unaccompanied, learned how to handle the objects, photograph and catalogue them for future reference.

5.3 The Literacy Hubs will be given letters selected and translated by the Detectives, from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to his family members, for their 105 young readers (aged 9 - 11) to respond to. The Detectives will then work out the best way to



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showcase their work, to the wider public to see. This will run alongside the Letters from the Archives project.

- 5.4 Working with The Hive and other organisations to place people who do not fit into other voluntary roles available, or require additional skills, time and patience to achieve their goals, for example, taking on a Detective with short term memory loss.
- 5.5 Detective volunteers are having a meaningful and worthwhile experience with us, engaging in culture in a very hands on way and we are supporting Detectives in the current cost of living crisis by signposting them to other services and in ways which support them navigating the world from a neurodiverse or disability perspective which we hadn't anticipated doing. We are also signposting, giving confidence and supporting volunteers so they can complete their journeys to other organisations or into paid work or other voluntary roles at the end of their time with us.
- 5.6 A short summary of some of the feedback we have had from the Detectives to date can be found in the following extracts from evaluation we have undertaken with them:

"Happy, confident in art skills, great at relaxing me and calming me down. Good skills for everyday lives or work situation."

" For people with Learning Disabilities it was spot on." - From Karen at Interactiv

"I felt a bit nervous coming in..to bang..I'm awesome."

Mixing in a group, making new friends, helped with socialising. Gained confidence. - from group evaluation

"a sense of community. A safe place to rehearse and push myself. Fun. Gave a reason to perform out of my comfort zone. I felt valued and helpful."

"It helped to boost my low self-confidence. Initially I felt rather nervous about meeting the other Detectives. But this soon vanished when I realised what a friendly and inclusive group it was."

"I wanted to be a part of something again. Everything else that I went to has gone (post covid). The group element is important and all the things that come with it."

"got me out of my shell"

"It's going really well. Helped me with anxiety and meeting new people. Got a lot of friends now and got a job."

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"The consistency has really helped. I like my routine and it's good to be in a routine."

- 5.7 This information will form the basis of the interim report which will be due to the Arts Council in the near future required as the project moves into its second year of delivery.

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Signed by  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:** None

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Briefing Meeting The Detectives - Conan Doyle Collection, February 2022	<a href="#"><u>CLED Decision Meeting 8 February 2022</u></a>