

# Planning for Social Outcomes at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums staff use a 'Planning Framework' to inform their project planning at an early stage, ensuring that the core purpose of each project is clear, and relates to key corporate priorities and to social outcomes.

The use of the planning tool and GSO indicator bank ensures that all staff engage with and think about social outcomes in their work. In this situation, the GSO indicator bank acts as a reference tool for staff to develop appropriate outcomes that are relevant to the work they are doing.

## Target Audience

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums staff, staff in other museum services working in partnership, both Hub and non-Hub.

The purpose of the planning tool is to better serve the local community of Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, especially targeted groups and community agencies that represent those groups.

## Aim

The North East Regional Museums Hub and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums developed the 'Planning Framework for Museums' tool for all staff planning new projects, in order to ensure that projects have clear objectives at the start, and that these objectives align to key corporate priorities (audiences, organisational development, finances, stewardship) and are mapped to specific learning, social, economic and environmental outcomes.

The Planning Framework for Museums document states that:

“It is possible that greater social impact (overall) can be achieved by:

- the early integration of robust information about audiences into programme planning
- having explicit aims for social impacts
- planning well thought out data collection strategies that demonstrate the impact that programme can achieve.”

The Hub commissioned the development of the GSO indicator tool to further support staff to think about social outcomes in their projects, by providing explicit examples of how certain social impacts might be achieved. In addition the GSO tool provides a question bank and examples of previous GSO evidence, to support staff to evaluate their projects against social outcomes.

## Process

The 'Planning Framework' is a mandatory requirement for all Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums projects. It came from a whole organisational review, which identified the value of using a logic model to plan and think about outputs, and the need for a further tool (the Planning Framework) to support staff to think about longer term outcomes.

All managers and team leaders receive training on the planning tool. In their teams, managers are then able to identify any bespoke training they need for their staff on the

project-by-project basis. The NERMN Evaluation Officer acts as the name contact for this work, providing ongoing advice, one to one contact, workshops and working into team planning days to support this.

The GSO indicator tool was developed by CHE Associates, and identified a third tier of GSO outcomes, which are very practical, specific, measurable outcomes. It then identifies sample questions that could be asked to measure each third tier outcome, and also worked with museum services across the North East and beyond to identify sample evidence, quotes and case studies that illustrate different third tier outcomes. Staff from Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, North East Regional Hub and non-Hub museums from the North East were involved in providing examples projects and case studies for the tool. A series of consultation workshops were then run with staff to look at the tool, talk about how they might use it in their work, and make suggestions for changes and amendments.

Since the tool was created, staff at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums have been using the Planning Framework and GSO Indicator Tool in tandem to support their planning of new projects. Over time, modifications have been made to the Planning Framework and GSO Indicator Tool to reflect current practice.

One example of how the GSOs are being used in practice at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums is in partnership development work within the outreach team. At the start of new projects, the outreach team produce a 'Memorandum of Understanding' that agrees with partners what the project will be about, and what the outcomes of the project should be from the beginning. In producing these documents, outreach staff use the GSOs as a reference point to help them decide what the outcomes will be, and to inform their conversations with partners at this early stage.

## **Number of participants**

All senior managers and management team leads have received the generic training, and their teams then receive the necessary bespoke training.

## **Impact and outcome**

All projects at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums are now related to core government and local authority priorities. Working in this way enables staff to set out aims at the start and to design projects around GSO outcomes. Examples of this include:

- Arts for Wellbeing – project working with over 16s living in South Tyneside, who are referred to the project by their GPs, social services etc. The project creates digital stories of people's lives across different demographics, for people with or without an established mental health need.
- Outcomes: Improved group and intergroup dialogue, mental wellbeing, supporting care and recovery, making a positive contribution
- Memories Group – reminiscence project with residents of a residential care home, using museum objects to spark memories and share stories.
- Outcomes: Safe, inclusive public spaces, group dialogue, mental wellbeing, supporting older people.

## **Evaluation**

Lessons learnt include:

1) A big challenge is to maintain the impact of the tools (both Planning Framework and GSO indicator tool), and the need to keep the momentum going. It is important that the idea of 'why are we doing this?' doesn't get lost.

For example, a priority is to make sure that existing staff are refreshed, and new staff get

access and training to these materials, and this requires an ongoing commitment. The type and nature of the training is important too, one size does not fit all. For practitioner staff, the starting point needs to be the practical application.

2) Many staff, particularly from the learning team, were already very comfortable with using Generic Learning Outcomes, and collecting rich evidence for the impact of their work against these outcomes. However, a key challenge was relevance – how did the GSO outcomes fit with their existing practice?

The shift in thinking from GLOs to GSOs was difficult, and the question of how the GLO and GSO outcomes fit together is one we are still exploring. One key point we have identified is that it is very important to think about the partnerships you will be working within. For example, for the education team frequently working in partnership with schools, or with Creative Partnerships, the GLO outcomes are a more helpful shared language.

However, within the Outreach Team in particular, there was great excitement at the opportunity to explore and use the GSOs in more depth, as they already fitted so well with their core purpose, and they could immediately cite many examples of past projects that illustrated different GSO outcomes. Therefore for this team, the GSO indicator bank was not so much about doing anything differently, but about recognising, recording and articulating the value of this work in a new way.

## **Tips**

The Planning Framework and GSO indicator bank have helped us to think about the impact our work will have on different types of outcomes. However, this type of community based work was already at the heart of what Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums has been doing – it is important to have those sorts of values in place, and already be working with communities, then the GSOs and the Planning Framework will help you to guide, plan and make a case for this work.

Think about the partners you will be working with, and what their priorities are. This will enable you to decide whether to use GLOs, GSOs or something else as the most appropriate shared language for planning and evaluation.

For us, the Planning Framework and GSO indicator bank are very much living documents, with staff wanting to make changes and additions as they use them. For example, the outreach team have developed their own mini indicator bank containing the sorts of outcomes that are most useful to them and fit best with the work they do. On a wider scale, we feel there is a need for a discourse about this type of work and using the GSOs, sharing what works and what people are doing nationally.

## **Future development**

Two key areas that Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums are currently developing are:

1. An 'overlaps grid' which will show the linkage between GLOs, GSOs, Every Child Matters, Find Your Talent, Creative Partnerships, National Indicators etc.

2. A set of indicators that might help up to identify impact in environmental and economic areas (in addition to the learning and social indicators we already have in the sector).

## **Case study record created on:**

08/02/2010

## **MLA funded:**

Yes

## **Institution:**

North East Regional Museums Hub, led by Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums.

**Key partners:**

North East Regional Museums Hub, MLA North East, all museum services across North East invited to take part in the research.

**Team members:**

John Hentley, Ann Fletcher-Williams, North East Regional Museums Hub.

**Start date:**

May 2008

**End date:**

Ongoing

**Contact:**

[John Hentley](#)

North East Regional Museums Hub  
0191 277 2314

**Programmes:**

Renaissance in the Regions

**Domains:**

Museums

**Sector developing role:**

Research and Evidence  
Policy  
Evaluation

**Social outcomes:**

GSO (Generic Social Outcomes)  
Raising participation  
Positive outcomes for vulnerable groups  
Tourism  
Community empowerment & active citizenship  
Local infrastructure & regeneration  
Learning & skills  
Health & well-being  
Celebrating local identity  
Economic Impact  
Community cohesion & inclusion

**Geographical Coverage:**

North