

Economic Impact Assessment Brief: Salisbury Cultural Pillar

Summary

The Salisbury Place Partnership, its Culture Pillar and key stakeholders encompassing the performing and visual arts, museums and libraries, outdoor spaces and heritage want to understand the economic impact of their activity on the city of Salisbury, surrounding areas and beyond. An Economic Impact Assessment (EIAs) captures the significant economic benefits cultural organisations can deliver to the cities and towns that host them. Cultural organisations support increased visitor and resident expenditure that stimulates local economies and can enhance the character and vibrancy of an area, increasing its attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. The Cultural Pillar therefore wishes to commission an EIA to measure the financial benefits of these organisations. The EIA needs to:

- a) Demonstrate the importance of the project as well as the importance of funding to stakeholders.
- b) Compare projects: EIAs can help compare the relative success of different projects.
- c) Consider wider issues: EIAs can consider wider issues, such as the impact on the environment or the social value of project, programme or organisations on their communities.
- d) Show the detailed impacts such as job creation, GVA, tourist activity, tax contributions, environmental and social improvements.
- e) Support Political Advocacy: to help evidence, articulate and promote the impact of the existing project, programme or organisation.

Further to this, a number of the key organisations in the city have capital ambitions, and we would like to access the impact of the plan, outlined below:

- a) Wiltshire Creative wishes to progress a transformation of Salisbury Playhouse
- b) Salisbury Cathedral wishes to progress its strategic development of the Cathedral Close (as outlined in its Master Plan 2017)
- c) The Salisbury Museum wishes to progress the development of its south wing into an art gallery and temporary exhibition space.

Politically having this data at the current time is useful for both the local and the national contexts:

- a) National government is indicating a strong direction of travel in terms of growth of towns and cities through capital building and investment. We know that culture is a major driver of economic growth and there are some notable examples across the country.
- b) Local government. With local elections in May 2025, we may have a change of leadership at city and county level. Providing those who invest in our programmes with impact data is crucial at this time to secure current funding and attract additional local authority funding. Good impact data may also leverage additional statutory funding with partner support.
- c) Arts Council – we know that ACE is also indicating that organisations should shout about their impact including their economic impact particularly outside London.

Specifically, we need:

An EIA that looks at the impacts of five areas of cultural activity (Heritage Sites (Salisbury Cathedral), Live Performance (Wiltshire Creative), Outdoor events (Salisbury City Council and Wiltshire Creative) Museum (Salisbury Museum) and Independent Music Venues on the city of Salisbury.

We also need a separate report on the Wiltshire Creative, Salisbury Cathedral and Salisbury Museum and the impact of their capital programmes.

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