



## HISTORY HEALTH & HAPPINESS

2020/21 Impact Report



# Doncaster Council



Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND





## 2020 IS A YEAR THAT NONE OF US WILL FORGET

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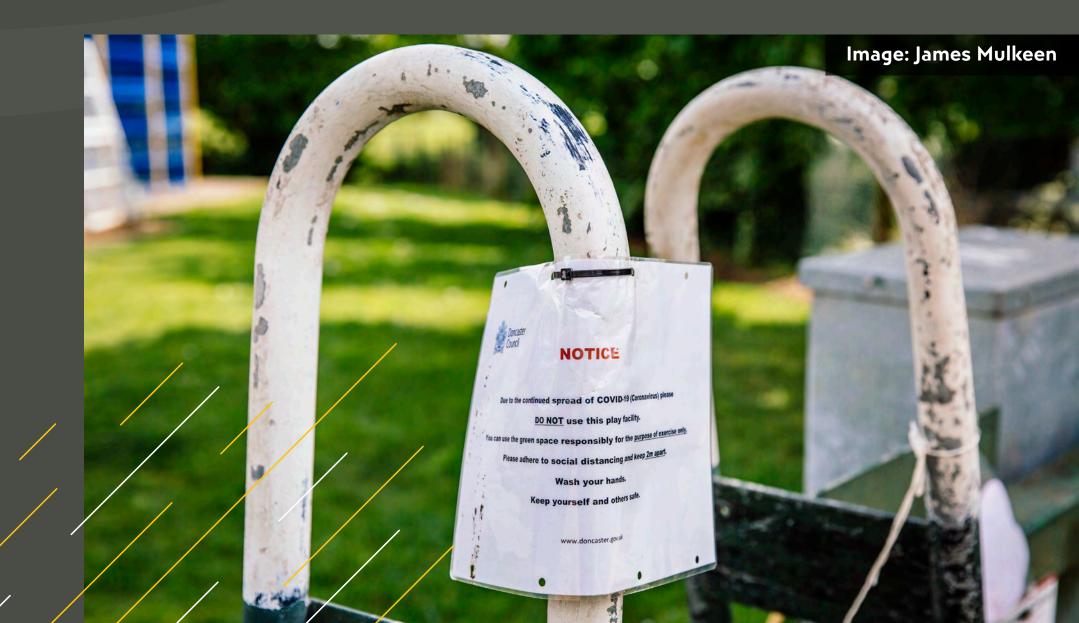
The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on all aspects of our lives. Words and phrases like lockdown, social distancing, isolating and bubbles are now part of our everyday vocabulary. Masks, online activities, contactless interactions, and the two metre rule are also the norm. We know that the pandemic has impacted on mental health, relationships, work and education. However, during the pandemic there have been many examples of creativity and innovation- and I believe History, Health and Happiness is one of these.

In April 2018 Heritage Doncaster became an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The NPO funding enables Heritage Doncaster to deliver a programme of outreach work called History, Health and Happiness. History, Health and Happiness aims to tackle isolation and improve wellbeing in Doncaster by using museum collections as the basis for outreach and community engagement activities.

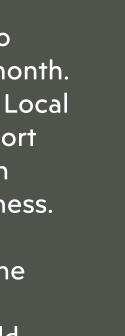
In 2020, the History, Health and Happiness programme was able to adapt quickly to continue to support the wellbeing of its programme participants, as well as the partner organisations that it worked with before the pandemic. History, Health and Happiness was also able to offer support to the increased number of Doncaster's residents experiencing isolation (including receiving referrals through social prescribing, social media and third sector organisations). The first History, Health and Happiness activity bundle was distributed to 500 isolated residents in April 2020, and the first digital social club session took place the week after lockdown. This rapid response was noted by evaluators Arc Research and Consultancy Ltd/Sheffield Hallam University, who said:

The project continued to be enthusiastic - switching delivery, bringing innovative approaches, and maintaining delivery in trying circumstances. History, Health and Happiness have sent over 6500 activity packs to isolated adults across Doncaster in 2020/21- that's roughly 600 a month. These packs address the barrier to social inclusion identified by the Local Government Association: a lack of access to the internet. In this report you will read the feedback from those who received the packs- with some describing them as a timely reminder of community and kindness.

The programme launched two new innovative digital social clubs- the Museum Make-A-Long and History Book Club. The evidence you'll read in this report shows that taking part in these clubs helps to build confidence and resilience, as well as having a positive impact on wellbeing. The evaluation data also demonstrates that participants developed digital skills and tried new things for the first time.







It is clear from the evaluation that the work of History, Health and Happiness is having a positive impact on wellbeing and community. We know that history and storytelling is helping people to feel better about themselves and where they live. History, Health and Happiness is building a reputation as a sector lead in delivering in communities, organisational wellbeing and partnership working, presenting at a variety of conferences and workshops in 2020.

2020 has also seen some exciting new developments for Doncaster, including the completion of the new Danum Gallery, Library and Museum. We can't wait to welcome you for a visit! On display are objects from Heritage Doncaster's collections, including some displayed for the first time. There are also objects on display that have been loaned by community groups and individuals including objects from 40 different people telling the story of 2020 in the new Museum of You display case.

This year, History, Health and Happiness has actively developed its reach engaging those who have not engaged with their community or museum before. The team are also working to represent and tell the stories of more of Doncaster's community, for example, recruiting 'Changing the Record' community researchers to seek out and broaden understanding of stories of underrepresented groups.

In January 2020 Arts Council England released their new strategy 'Let's Create', and we are confident that History, Health and Happiness will continue to excel in line with their investment principles, particularly in 'inclusion and relevance'. 2021 also saw the launch of a new Business Plan for Heritage Doncaster. History, Health and Happiness works across all four of the new strategic objectives.

As we look to the future and a roadmap out of Covid-19 restrictions, History, Health and Happiness has a clear plan to develop their work further and continue to tackle isolation and improve wellbeing.

I am honoured to be able to write this introduction to the 2020/21 Impact Report on behalf of History, Health & Happiness. The programme has made a significant impact through the past year despite the immense difficulties Covid restrictions posed on delivery. I am sure you will agree this impact report provides inspiring and joyful reading.

Matt Cridge, Head of Stronger Families, Doncaster Council



### Who we are

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### HISTORY, HEALTH & HAPPINESS

In April 2018 Heritage Doncaster became an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The NPO funding enables Heritage Doncaster to deliver a strategic programme of outreach work called History, Health and Happiness.

History, Health and Happiness aims to tackle isolation and improve wellbeing by using museum collections as the basis for outreach and community engagement activities. Our activities use history and storytelling to spark conversation, improve wellbeing and tackle isolation. Simply putwe use history to empower people to feel good about themselves and their communities, and to feel more connected.

History, Health and Happiness works with adults and families. The activities are delivered in partnership with other organisations and independently. People access our programmes by self-referral, as well as through referrals from social prescribing, and other third sector organisations.

This report outlines the impact that the History, Health and Happiness programme has had in 2020/21. It is based on data compiled by Sheffield Hallam University/Arc Research and Consultancy Ltd, case studies and feedback.

What we do



Image: The Museum of You Case at the Danum Gallery, Library & Museum, Heritage Doncaster





#### FEELING CONNECTED

Our activities are making a difference in Doncaster. In 2019/20, we found that participants in our programmes felt more connected to the world around them (Sheffield Hallam University/Arc Research and *Consultancy Ltd*). We know that feeling connected is good for you. Loneliness increases the likelihood of mortality by 26% and is just as bad for your heart as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Holt-Lunstad, 2015).

Prior to Covid-19, the Understanding Society Survey found that 8.5% of people in the UK said that they were often or always lonely. The Covid Social Study data collected between 21st March and 10th May 2020 found that this number was now 18.5%. In general, the data shows that the people who felt most lonely before the Covid pandemic in the UK, now have even higher levels of loneliness (What Works Wellbeing/UCL. 2020). Programmes that facilitate connection are more important than ever as we respond to the impact of Covid-19.



## EELING GOOD

In Doncaster it is estimated that 55,000 people in the borough experience some form of mental health problem (Doncaster HWB Strategy). We also know that people with experience of mental health problems have been more likely to see their mental health worsen as a result of coronavirus restrictions (Mind). History, Health and Happiness is working to improve people's mental health scores in our activities by fostering a greater sense of belonging, as well as improving confidence, and optimism about the future. Our activities can be part of someone's programme of recovery, as well as a way to maintain good mental health.

## FEELING PROUD

Looking at Doncaster's history means we can start to see the town differently, appreciating its past and stories. A sense of belonging can bring communities together, reducing differences in social and cultural identities. A sense of place is also important in fostering community pride and creating a Doncaster that people can be proud of. During the pandemic roughly half of the public say they have volunteered to help others in their community (Health Foundation/IPSOS Mori, Nov 2020). Community spirit "made a comeback" in 2020, and History, Health and Happiness seeks to capitalise on this.

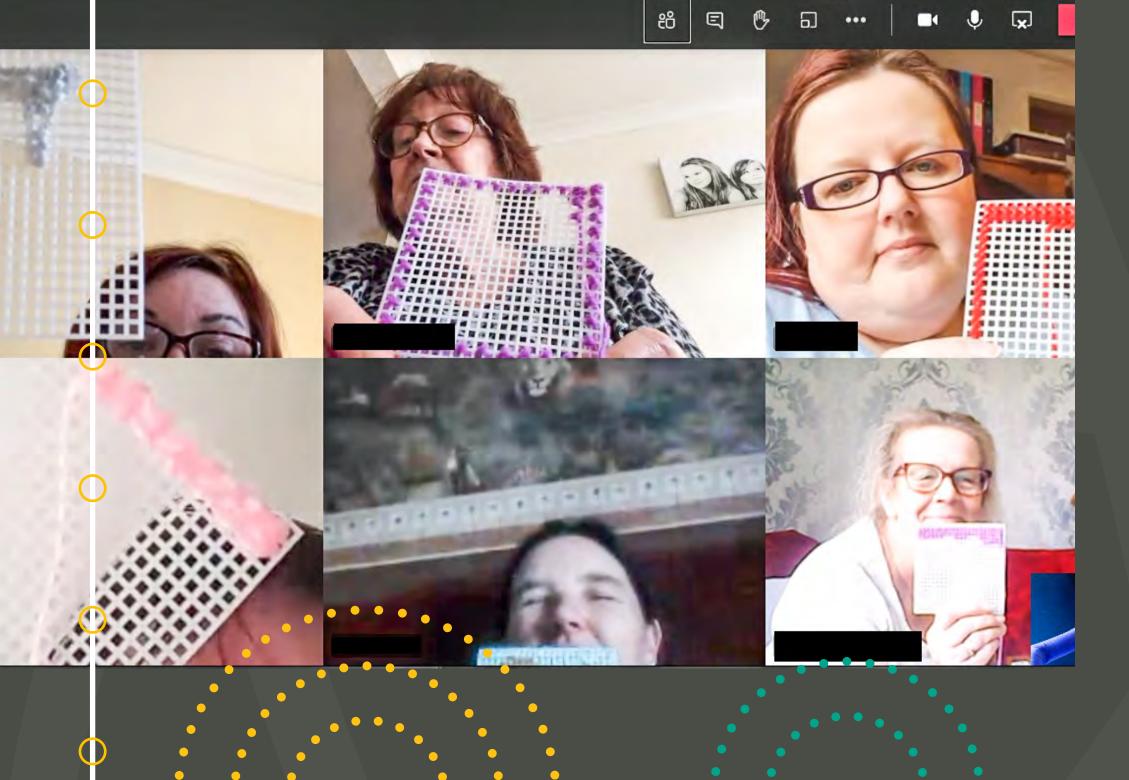
## FEELING SKILLED

Our programmes encourage people to develop their confidence and encourage participants to gain new skills. Wellbeing is a key influencer on the economy (Centre for Economics and Business Return) and people who are stronger, healthier and happy are better workers. One of the biggest skills learnt in 2020 for many was digital literacy. Twenty people got online, some for the first time, to access History, Health and Happiness's Digital Social Clubs and stay connected.



## Hazel's story

19th January Mimage: The Museum Make-A-Long, Heritage Doncaster



Hazel is in her mid-50s, and lives in a pit village in Doncaster. She is very interested in arts and crafts and joined both the Museum Make-A-Long and History Book Club in the summer of 2020.

I was feeling very, very alone, depressed and isolated. Just hopeless, really. I was shielding and it was very difficult to know that you couldn't go out, and that people couldn't come to visit. My grandchildren still had birthdays, and my birthday and Mother's Day also passed by. I don't consider myself to be a good mixer, but when I saw the digital clubs advertised I thought it might be an interesting way of meeting other people. I love history, and I thought hearing other people talking and joining in would be good for me.

Being part of the clubs gave me something to look forward to. I was able to talk to others in the same situation as me, who were also shielding. In the group I feel comfortable talking and sharing as they are really laid back. If the group had been in person in a room I wouldn't have said a word! Being online has given me the confidence to say what I think and join in. I think that I would also be able to meet up with the group now in the future. Other groups I've been part of in the past I've ended up dropping out because of the pressure of getting out of the house and meeting new people.

Taking part in the groups has opened so many new horizons for me. The History Book Club has encouraged me to read more and read different things. I've also learnt about the origins of different crafts in the craft group, and found out about important people that came from Doncaster. I've also been able to share my skills with other people, teaching wool crafts, which is really nice. I never thought I'd look forward to something as much as I do these groups.





#### Activity Packs

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Creative

Mindfulness

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In 2020/21 History, Health and Happiness created activity booklets for isolated adults and families. Over 6500 activity booklets were sent to individuals and groups across Doncaster. Packs were also distributed by third party organisations, food banks and our partner organisations. Here's a taster of what they included.

#### Make it Snappy!

A snap tin was a miners lunch box. The term relates to the way these small boxes snapped shut to keep the contents as clean as possible from the dirt and grit. Miners were limited as to what food they could take underground because it was mucky and hot and this meant many types of food would go off quickly and could easily get soiled. Probably the most common and popular lunch for a miner was a jam sandwich.

Food for Thought What was in your lunch box?

If you could take one item of food in a small snap tin what would you take?

What's your dream sandwich?

If you could have a chat with someone over lunch who would you pick? What would you talk about?

## SPEND 5 MINUTES LOOKING AT THIS PAINTING

Hilda's Warning: 'Mind you're in by half-past seven, it's bath night',' Brumfitt, George Edward (1917–1993) Image: Heritage Doncaster

What is the first thing that you see?

What is happening in this painting?

Step into the scene. What can you smell, hear and taste? Can you hear the stove roaring? Can you smell the coal burning? Can you feel the uneven cold stone slabs beneath your feet? Is the room warm or cold? How does the room make you feel?

> Hilda's Warning: 'Mind you're in by half-past seven, it's bath night', Brumfitt, George Edward (1917–1993)





Steve is in his sixties and retired in 2018. During the Covid-19 pandemic he has returned to work for the NHS. He joined the History Book Club in September 2020.

I'm interested in learning, finding out new things and exploring new ideas. The History Book Club was the opportunity to join up with people, albeit in a virtual capacity, to maintain contact because we'd lost a lot of face-to-face contact due to Covid. It was a chance to keep my mind going and it was also a chance to find out and learn more. I'd never been part of an online group before and I didn't really know what to expect, but I found that it was enjoyable right from the start. **It's a cheerful and friendly experience and something I look forward to.** It's just like chatting in a pub- a virtual pub!

The people are very easy to get on with, and they're a good mix of people. From Dave in his seventies, to Emily in her 20s! The group members tend to bring their own bits of information



into the sessions too, whether it's family history or personal interest. That aspect adds another layer. We look at a topic which is fairly broad, like the Industrial Revolution, and then we look at how that's impacted Doncaster, and then you get people chipping in with their own comments and experiences too. I've found that really interesting. Everyone in the group is really welcoming, and you can share your thoughts and opinions really openly.

I've really learned a lot. I'm in my sixties, but you never stop learning if you've got the opportunity to! I've gained a lot more understanding of Doncaster through this group. There's a lot to be proud of about Doncaster and its history. It's certainly made me appreciate where I live more than I did previously. The History Book Club has also opened up a new adventure in reading for me – using Kindles! I come away from every session thinking, "Well, I know more things now than I did an hour and a half ago!".

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#### Responding to Covid-19

The lockdown restrictions announced in March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic meant that History, Health and Happiness had to change its approach to tackling isolation and facilitating opportunities for connection.

History, Health and Happiness also recognised the importance of continuing to support those who accessed our programming, and the charities and organisations we partner with.

We responded quickly with two main methods:

- Offline activity bundles
- 2) Online social activities

We recognised the need for both approaches, as we understood digital exclusion to be a driver of social isolation during the pandemic (Local Government Association, 2020). Many of our participants didn't have reliable access to the internet, or found it to be a source of anxiety. Research for the *Centre for Ageing* Better and Good Things Foundation found that digital exclusion is closely related to social exclusion and inequality. This means that the people most at risk of feeling lonely are also the most likely to be digitally excluded, and vice versa.

Providing opportunities for connection was vitally important, as more and more of Doncaster's residents were experiencing isolation as a result of lockdown, social distancing and shielding. Mental health also took a big hit, with more than half of adults and over two thirds of young people saying their mental health got worse in the first lockdown in 2020 (Mind).

In May 2021 we were delighted to be shortlisted for the Community Impact Award at the Museums + Heritage Awards in recognition of the impact our work had in the community. Our programme manager, Victoria Ryves, was also nominated for the COVID Special Recognition Award.

### ACTIVITY PACKS

History, Health and Happiness sent monthly activity packs to those who may be feeling isolated- totalling over 6500 sent to date!

The activity packs for adults were distributed via existing partner organisations, like b:friend, as well as new ones like Doncaster Mind and Age UK. We also sent packs to food banks, care homes and neighbourhood support groups. At Christmas we put together special festive bundles for 700 of Doncaster's isolated residents.

Two family packs were created and sent to families across the Borough, as well as a unique pack for 50 of Doncaster's young carers. Arc Research/Sheffield Hallam University say that, "the receipt of something on the doorstep allowed engagement and the prospect of something to do for those shielding or isolating." Interviews with those who received the packs revealed that they were valued too.

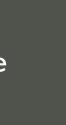
We also partnered with Right Up Our Street and the Beare Project to deliver the People's Palace of Possibility – an immersive creative experience.



















"The packs have been really interesting. They have kept me going. I haven't been out since March"



#### ported to Age UK

Pupa

# "They are really nice. It felt like a gift."

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"Thank you for the booklets, gifts, memory stirrers and giving me time to think back."

Postcard

Image: History, Health and Happiness Activity Packs, Heritage Doncaster



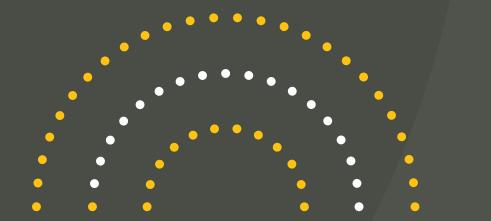


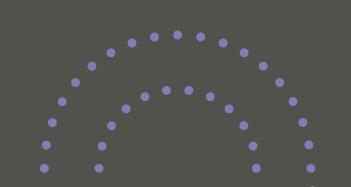
## DIGITAL SOCIAL CLUBS

In 2020 History, Health and Happiness launched two new and innovative digital social clubs- the Museum Make-A-Long and the History Book Club. Interviews conducted by *Arc Research and Sheffield Hallam University* found that these online groups **"reached out to the vulnerable and built online communities."** The evaluation concludes that **"for those who attend the [digital social clubs] the impact of the project has been considerable, both in terms of connection, mental health, and increased confidence around computer use."** The History, Health and Happiness team helped people to get online (some for the first time) so that they could form new connections and friendships, improving their technical skills alongside their knowledge of the local area.

Our pre-pandemic social clubs were built around objects from Heritage Doncaster's collections. Although we haven't been able to physically hold the objects in 2020, the objects have still been present. The evaluators note that "objects have become woven into personal stories shared by the attendees at sessions. Being in people's homes means that objects can be brought and the co-production element can happen within a session as everyone shares their object and their story."

The Digital Social Clubs have enabled participants to make new friends, develop skills and improved the wellbeing of those who take part. Digital social club attendees have a 20% increase in interest in new things – a contributing factor to increased mental health scores.













### > "A godsend for mental health reasons"



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## Marie's story

Image: The Museum Make-A-Long, Heritage Doncaster



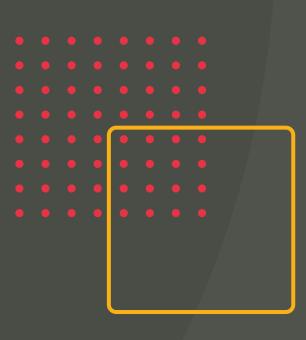
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Marie is in her late-seventies and lives alone in Doncaster. She joined the Museum Make-A-Long in summer 2020.

When the lockdown started I felt like I was losing my spirit. When I read about the group, I thought "you know, that's for me!" My initial interest was the history side of it, but now I'm enjoying the crafts that I'm doing. Once I joined the group I felt as though I had a sense of belonging. I belong to something. I've got people that are exactly like me. Its somebody listening to me, and me listening to them. I've met new people, and made new friends. I've also been empowered, finding out that I can do things that I never thought I could do before- like painting. I never thought I was artistic- but I am! It's an achievement knowing that I can do these things, and something I wouldn't have done if it hadn't have been for the group. I can't wait to sit down and do another painting. My daughter even put the Christmas decorations I made on her tree, which made me so happy! Before I joined the group, I was beginning to lose my sparkle. But **my sparkle has come back**- and that's down to looking forward to Tuesdays!







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### Herstory

### A CASE STUDY

Herstory is a group for women in Denaby Main, formed in 2019. It is led by the History, Health and Happiness team. Prior to the pandemic it met once a week in a community library. A highlight for the group was a trip to London to visit the Houses of Parliament in 2019. The group have also visited Cusworth Hall and travelled to meet musician, Frank Turner.

Pre-Covid changes in participant's experience were noted over time. These were:



Many of the Herstory participants share that their mental health has improved whilst being a member of the group. One participant said: "It has improved our mental health - on the worst days you still want to go doing activities takes your mind off it - there is no judgement or bickering." During a focus group session in 2020 one member of the group was able to identify increased confidence and improved mental health in another member, revealing that the group's impact is really visible.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the group has moved online. A core group of around 6 women have continued to meet in this way, often using their phones to connect. Access to the internet, childcare, and home-schooling have been a barrier to some. The group continuing virtually was important for the participants. It has been described by the women involved, some of whom have suffered bereavement, as a lifeline during the pandemic.

Particularly during the earlier part of the pandemic, the group was an opportunity to share, and receive and give support. The sessions were a chance to get in touch, and share experiences.

Image: Herstory meeting Frank Turner, March 2020, Heritage Doncaster

In the virtual sessions- the museum objects have been missed- "online we can't touch stuff". Several of the participants have also donated objects related to Covid-19 to the museum collection- making history themselves! The groups will be returning to in-person sessions in 2021.

Overall, Herstory has had an impact in terms of improving confidence and connectedness. The women involved are engaged, confident, and engaging outside of the sessions too. We can't wait to get back to meeting in person!

I've gained an appreciation for strong independent women that have gone before us.



Image: Doncaster Local Studies Library

#### Creative Mindfulness

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#### Activity Pack Taster

#### SHOPPING IN 1960S DONCASTER- A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

The Sixties was a time of economic growth, high employment and rising disposable incomes and this meant a thriving high-street, largely made up of flourishing small businesses and independent shops. Many Doncaster residents will have fond memories of going in to town and shopping during this decade.



Images: Doncaster Local Studies Llbrary



F. W. WC OLWORTH & Cº L™ + 🐨



These are photographs of Doncaster town centre taken in 1961. Take a look at these images and think about the following questions:

1. Are any of these shops familiar to you? Do you remember shopping at these shops?


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2. Can you remember what you bought?

#### A MENU TO REMEMBER

# F. W. WC OLWORTH & Cº LTP

#### MEMORIES: HODGSON & HEPWORTH



Hodgson and Hepworth was a firm favourite with shoppers in the town centre for many years. A large food emporium, chemist and cafe, the family run business even ran its own bus service into town.

Do you remember Hodgson and

Hodgson and Hepworth also held functions in their cafe, as we can see from this menu for a Dinner Dance in 1962. Shoppers and staff were all very sad to see the closure of the store in 1979 - the end of an era for Doncaster.

#### Dinner Dance HODGSON & HEPWORTH'S Saturday, February 3rd, 1962. MENU Fream of Tomato Soup or Fruit Juie Stuffed Roast Chicken & Bread Sau reamed & Baked Potate

ristmas Pudding & Rum Sau Fruit Salad & Ice Cream

Cheese & Biscuits

WARMSWORTH CRICKET CLUB

Annual

The taste and smell of food can really make us think back to a certain time and place - particularly our childhood. Can you remember any favourites from your childhood? Or maybe you can remember dinners you used to cook for family and friends? Use the space below to write a 'Menu to Remember' - what food will you choose, and what does it remind you of?

FOOD	MEMORIES
	<u> </u>



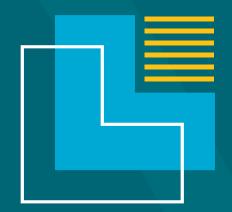


#### What we have achieved

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#### HEALTH & WELLBEING

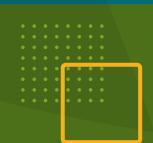
Digital social club attendees have a





adults were referred into activities by Doncaster Social Prescribing

SENSE OF PLACE



**72**%\*

of participants found out about places near to them

new partnerships with organisations

SKILLS

91% of participants learned something new\*

**91**% of participants shared their skills, memories or experiences\*



83% of participants became interested in trying other activities\*



interactions in digital social clubs

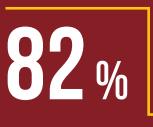
Christmas bundles sent to isolated adults in Doncaster

activity packs sent to isolated adults and families across Doncaster

of participants met someone new\*



of participants talked to people outside of their age group\*



of participants made someone else feel welcome\*



activity bundles sent to Doncaster's young carers

#### 🚺 OTHER



hours of online social sessions - that's as long as 92 of Boris Johnson's Covid-19 briefings!

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EE	

individuals and groups loaned items for the Museum of You 'Story of 2020' exhibition



online exhibitions



shortlisted for 2 Museum + Heritage Award for Community Impact and COVID Special Recognition



cups of tea sent by mail



museum objects used as inspiration in digital social clubs



stamps used to mail out activity bundles across Doncasterthat's just about the length of the Mallard!





What else we've been UP to

In autumn 2020 History, Health and Happiness launched Changing the Record. Changing the Record is a community research programme that aims to shine a light on and uncover stories that are underrepresented in Heritage Doncaster's collection and the history books. 12 community researchers are working to uncover and share new stories. These include stories of Doncaster's Black history, LGBTQIA+ history, the stories of women, the stories of disability and much more. The research findings will be showcased in an exhibition in 2021, as well as supplementing Museum catalogue records.



Image: Kiera Rusling's Living Room Museum

### EXHIBITIONS & OBJECTS

The History, Health and Happiness team sought to continue to co-curate and collect community stories in 2020. In April 2020, they launched the Living Room Museum, encouraging people to curate their own museums at home. The team also worked with Doncaster Conversation Club to mark <u>Refugee Week 2020</u>, and with Second Generation (2G) to share an online exhibition to complement their exhibition sharing memories of the sons and daughters of the Windrush generation at the Frenchgate Shopping Centre

The team also worked to collect objects that told the story of community in 2020. These objects will be displayed in the Museum of You case when the Danum Gallery, Library and Museum opens. They also form an <u>online exhibition</u>.

### CHANGING THE RECORD

#### DONCASTER STANDS PEACEFULLY

# BLACK LIVES MATTER

Image: Black Lives Matter protest banner, Heritage Doncaster

C SP ND MU H G G Image: Women Against Pit Closures badge, Heritage Doncaster



Image: Second Generations' The Way We Were exhibition at Frenchgate Shopping Centre



### MOVING MUSEUM

2021 will see the launch of Heritage Doncaster's Moving Museum. The Moving Museum is a travelling museum that will bring Heritage Doncaster's collections to places near you! The really exciting part though is that individuals and groups across the borough will be invited to be curators- the exhibitions will be shaped by you!

# OKING AFTER OURSELVES WE CAN LOOK AFTER YOU

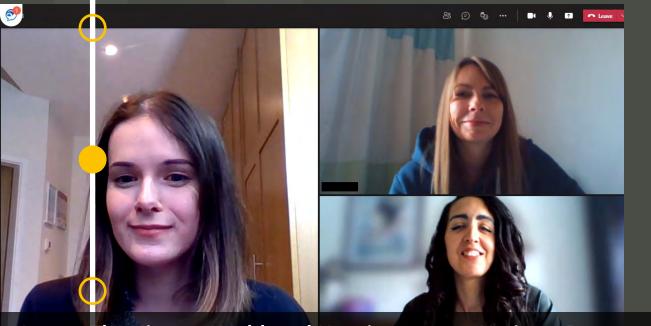
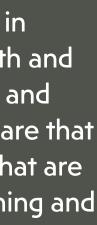


Image: The History, Health and Happiness team. Heritage Doncaster

In 2020, the History, Health and Happiness team have examined the creating a culture of care. The culture of care focusses on building in impact that delivering culture and wellbeing projects can have on its time for reflection, as well as moments of joy, for the History, Health and staff. The pandemic shone a spotlight on some of the emotional labour Happiness staff. Building in team wellbeing into the History, Health and involved in delivering the programme. It also really emphasised how Happiness programme ensures that we are fostering a culture of care that important it was to look after the mental health and resilience of the team, feeds back into the experience of the participant. Ultimately, staff that are so that they are best able to support the wellbeing of our participants. feeling nourished, and supported, deliver activities that our nourishing and The History, Health and Happiness programme is working towards supportive to our participants. It creates a cycle of care.







### JOIN US!

Fancy joining any of our social clubs or activities? You can get involved by emailing YourMemories@doncaster.gov.uk or calling 01302 737339.

We need

you

#### HERITAGE DONCASTER'S COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

Like the sound of what we are doing? Do you have new ideas or suggestions for change? Then join Heritage Doncaster's Community Advisory Panel to shape the activities, programming and vision of Heritage Doncaster.

#### PARTNERSHIPS TO MAKE DONCASTER A HAPPIER PLACE

The period of recovery in the aftermath of the pandemic will rely on working together and community spirit. We want to work with new organisations and groups in Doncaster. We are seeking new partnerships so that we can continue to make a difference in communities on a really hyper-local level. We also want to work with more third sector organisations and providers, and facilitate others to be able to share history, and co-produce and co-design activities. We want to hear from new organisations, freelancers, and Council teams who are interested in working together. We are particularly keen to work with people from protected characteristic backgrounds.

#### GETTING THE WORD OUT

We also have tips on building partnerships, co-production and wellbeing that we'd love to share! We also want as many people as possible to know about the History, Health and Happiness programme of work, and for as many people as possible to be able to attend our activities. We need your help in getting the word out!

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Victoria on

yourmemories@doncaster.gov.uk 01302 737339

You can find out more at

www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk/projects/happyhistory/



