Heritage and Cultural Identity
Work Program

International Union of Architects (UIA)
Heritage and Culture in Health and wellbeing

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World Health Organization (WHO) defines health since 1948

“This definition is continued since 1948, and yet accepted by many

“State of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”
Cultural activities in health

- GP Visits: 37% DROPES
- Hospital Admission: 39% REDUCES
- Health Services Cost: £576 REDUCES

according to UK Parliamentary report
In 2014, the London School of Economics (LSE) conducted research to explore the evidence of the wellbeing impacts of cultural engagement. This work gives us new evidence of the link between our policies and the social impacts of cultural engagement.

Arts engagement was found to be associated with higher wellbeing and was valued at 1,084 per person per year.

Association was also found between frequent library use and reported wellbeing.
Heritage can provide healing spaces and activities for people living with dementia and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The Museums on Prescription project by Professor Helen Chatterjee and her colleagues at University College London shows heritage could improve mental wellbeing and reduce depression of dementia and PTSD patients.
Archaeology can reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder, and gave a sense of self-purpose. The project Operation Nightingale, established in 2012 by the UK Defence Infrastructure Organisation showcases the benefits of archaeology for the mental health of former soldiers.
Health and wellbeing are at the very top of public policy concerns right now, and the heritage sector has a huge amount to contribute.

The potential of cultural heritage as wellbeing producer seems to be recognized almost entirely on a theoretical level, and it is often excluded from long-term planning of public policies. As architect, we have responsibility to bring this theory in practice.

“Places look after people as much as people look after places.”
Thank you