

West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy 2020-2030



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Cover images (top to bottom): The Corn Exchange | Shaw House outdoor theatre | Storytime at Newbury Library | Festival of Light, The Corn Exchange, photo Alex Harvey-Brown | The Hound of the Baskervilles in the Watermill Theatre Garden. photo Pamela Raith Photography| Interactive app at West Berkshire Museum

Foreword

Foreword by Councillor Howard Woollaston

Culture and heritage touch everybody's lives and we are fortunate to have an abundance of arts, heritage and community organisations, events and activities and a wealth of beautiful and historic places and landscapes to enjoy in West Berkshire.

Our vision is that by 2030 we will have a sustainable, resilient and thriving cultural heritage sector which continues to contribute to the local economy, increases its contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents (through improved access to cultural heritage and cultural education and learning) and that our precious historic environment is protected and better understood for the enjoyment of all.

Many thanks to the individuals and organisations who helped in the development of this strategy by taking the time to consider what is important and unique about the cultural heritage in West Berkshire, and what we can do together to make it even better.

The strategy will be delivered by The West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy Delivery Group – a partnership between the council and key partners who have the knowledge, experience and networks to develop the right actions and ensure that progress is maintained to succeed in our vision.



Cllr Howard Woollaston,

Executive Portfolio Holder: Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture

“Culture and heritage touch everybody's lives and we are fortunate to have an abundance of arts, heritage and community organisations, events and activities and a wealth of beautiful and historic places and landscapes to enjoy in West Berkshire.”

“The strategy recognises the uniqueness of the area – its rural and urban communities, its heritage, historic buildings and landscape, the richness of the arts in all its forms”



Vision

By 2030 we will have a **sustainable, resilient and thriving** cultural heritage sector that **supports creativity and innovation, continuing to make a significant contribution to the economy.**

The cultural heritage sector will have **increased its contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents**, and there will be **improved access to cultural heritage and activities.**

We will have supported an **increase in cultural education learning, training and career progression.**

Our **unique cultural heritage and historic environment will have been protected** and its **significance promoted.**

This document contains six strategic themes, each leading to an associated high-level objective. These have been arrived at through consultation with the public and partners and take into consideration a number of key strategic documents including the West Berkshire Vision 2036¹, West Berkshire Council strategies for Leisure², Environment³, Economic Development⁴, Health and Wellbeing⁵, and the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Policy CS19: Historic Environment and Landscape Character)⁶ in conjunction with regional and national strategies and plans including Arts Council England, Historic England, NHS, and Visit Britain/ Visit England.

These are:

- **Sustainability:** Ensure our cultural and heritage organisations are sustainable and thrive.
- **Economic Development:** Increase domestic and international tourism to generate income, investment and increase economic resilience.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Contribute to the improvement in the health and wellbeing of all our residents.
- **Access:** Improve access to cultural heritage and activities.
- **Education, Training and Employment:** Improve access to cultural education, training and employment opportunities.
- **Heritage and the Historic Environment:** Protect and promote our unique cultural history, heritage and historic environment.

¹ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=46989&p=0>

² Draft Leisure Strategy – no link available

³ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=46989&p=0>

⁴ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/drafteds>

⁵ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=33954&p=0>

⁶ <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=36373&p=0>

Introduction

‘Each community has its own culture – its own history, museums and traditions. In this global, interconnected economy, what is local and unique has a special value and should be supported and encouraged’⁷

The term ‘Cultural Heritage’ means something different to all of us. It is a term which includes a broad and diverse range of creative, cultural and heritage professions, activities, buildings and landscapes.

For the purposes of this strategy and the accompanying Delivery Plan, when we refer to **cultural heritage**, we are using the combined definitions below (a. b. and c.) which are widely used when describing cultural heritage.

Where we use the term **arts and culture**, we are referring to the definitions a. and b. below*

- a. In May 2007 the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS)⁸ defined **arts and culture** as: Arts, Libraries, Museums, Galleries, Broadcasting, Film and the Music Industry, Architecture and the Historic Environment (landscape and built heritage).
- b. The DCMS mapping document for the Creative Industries produced in 1998⁹ defined the creative industries as: Advertising, Architecture, Crafts, Design, Fashion, Film, Music, Performing Arts, Publishing, TV, and Radio.

Where we use the term **heritage**, we are referring to the definition used by Historic England¹⁰

- c. **Heritage** includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as biodiversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities and is an integral part of modern life. It is a social dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change. The particular heritage and collective memory of each locality or community is irreplaceable and an important foundation for development, both now and into the future.

Note: The National Endowment for Science and the Arts¹¹ has undertaken research into the inadequacy and ‘incompleteness’ of the DCMS definition and made recommendations for a more inclusive and accurate definition. As yet this has not been widely adopted, so for the purposes of this strategy we are using the DCMS 1998 listing.

⁷https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper__3_.pdf

⁸<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-digital-culture-media-sport>

⁹DCMS (1998) ‘Creative Industries Mapping Document 1998.’ D

¹⁰https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/hpr-definitions/#cat_H

¹¹https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/a_dynamic_mapping_of_the_creative_industries.pdf

Whilst individual understanding will vary according to personal perception and engagement with cultural heritage, the benefits to individuals, including wellbeing, the economy, personal and academic development are recognised and evidenced.

This strategy links with and delivers on the collective aims in the West Berkshire Vision 2036¹², and is therefore not a stand-alone document. This strategy outlines the high-level themes, objectives, aims and actions we have as a council for the district's cultural heritage sector through to 2030.

Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the cultural heritage sector with 93% of responders to the stakeholder consultation stating they had been impacted.

Throughout 2020, many organisations and individuals, particularly freelancers, are struggling to survive economically. The resulting economic downturn presents challenges on a scale not encountered for decades. It is clear from the public and stakeholder consultation responses conducted for this strategy- and the previously unprecedented steps taken by for example, Arts Council England¹³ and the National Lottery Heritage Fund¹⁴ - that the cultural heritage sector is at a critical point.

This strategy aims to support the sector, and in so doing, the significant contribution it makes to people's health and wellbeing, the economy, education and training, improving people's access to cultural heritage and activities, whilst protecting what is one of West Berkshire's most valued assets- its historic environment.

There is evidence to show that cultural participation can contribute to social relationships, community cohesion, and/or make communities feel safer and stronger. Research has found positive links between cultural participation and improved social skills and engagement with the wider community, and evidence that culture can play a role in tackling crime¹⁵.

Much of this strategy focusses on participation, whether that is for health and wellbeing, education, training, volunteering, for example: to help protect our scheduled monuments, or for pure enjoyment. The consultation feedback confirms that while there are a large number and range of events and activities in the district, some residents are unable to access these.

This strategy aims to improve access, creating more inclusive provision, so that as many residents as possible who wish to engage with our cultural heritage can do so.

¹²<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=46989&p=0>

¹³<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/>

¹⁴<http://www.heritagefund.org.uk/>

¹⁵https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416279/A_review_of_the_Social_Impacts_of_Culture_and_Sport.pdf

Strategy Delivery – A Phased Approach

The strategy will be delivered in phases. The Covid-19 pandemic had had a considerable negative impact and has shifted the focus of the earlier stages of its delivery. Support and economic recovery is a priority to continue to provide residents and visitors with a strong cultural heritage offer. Working across services within the council and with partners in all sectors- such as economic development, tourism, health and wellbeing, education and training, planning and the environment- is very important to encourage inward investment, fully utilise what we already have and protect and support the cultural heritage sector to ensure benefits are delivered to communities.

Partners: we will be looking to work collaboratively with public, private and community sector services and providers including extending our reach to include those not previously worked with. This will be alongside local organisations, charities and volunteers to deliver this strategy. This is key, as we want to engage with those with an interest in the cultural heritage of this district, and complement existing provision, adding value and opportunities.

Over the next 10 years this strategy will need to be adapted to reflect changes to local need, regional and national cultural heritage policies, strategies, and the wider context such as the impact of Covid-19 on health and wellbeing and the economy.

Now more than ever, it is crucial that we work closely and cooperatively partners to deliver focussed and targeted support, projects/programmes for the sector and communities of West Berkshire.

In developing this strategy it has become clear that we require more data regarding the cultural heritage sectors. This is important as we are reliant upon this to measure the current state of cultural heritage across the district, and to set meaningful targets to indicate progress. A method for regular data gathering and processing will be one of the actions in the first phase of the Delivery Plan.



Craft and Chat group at Newbury Library

Delivery Plan

Through consultation with partners it was apparent that the Delivery Plan will be more effective and deliverable if developed with a range of partners. This is due to the delivery of this strategy:

- covering a breadth of specialisms and they should be part of planning.
- being reliant on partnership working.
- requiring input from organisations/individuals who represent the diversity of the population of West Berkshire.
- requiring grassroots and strategic knowledge and thinking.
- so that it delivers the requirements of the sector.

We will form a Delivery Group to develop a Delivery Plan. This is a document which outlines the actions, projects/programmes to deliver this strategy, specifying timescale, partners and resources required. It will indicate links to other West Berkshire Council Strategies and Plans (i.e. Leisure, Economic Development, Health & Wellbeing, Environment), Key Performance Indicators and measures will be set accordingly.

“Over the next 10 years this strategy will need to be adapted to reflect changes to local need, regional and national cultural heritage policies, strategies, and the wider context such as the impact of Covid-19 on health and wellbeing and the economy.”

Context and Strategy Themes

West Berkshire has a significant cultural heritage offer, with theatres, museums, festivals, visual arts, music, historic buildings and a beautiful landscape. This is combined with individual artists, makers, and creative professionals, small and medium enterprises (SME's), particularly film production and a developing digital/gaming sector. It is difficult to quantify exactly the number of community groups, societies and clubs, and those who give up their time to volunteer in the cultural heritage sector. However, through consultation with the public, and the development of this strategy, we can say with confidence that West Berkshire has a vibrant cultural heritage sector.

This is not to say that there are parts of West Berkshire which are not well served, a fact which has been supported through the results of the public consultation. Many have cited a lack of provision in rural areas and access to activities/performances in urban locations to be a barrier. Improving access for all is an important theme in this strategy and the accompanying delivery Plan.

In April 2019, Arts Council England with research conducted by Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)¹⁶ estimated the arts and culture (cultural heritage) industry contributed £10.8 billion a year to the UK economy (based on data from the Office of National Statistics), a growth of £390 million in a year.

Productivity in the arts and culture industry between 2009 and 2016 was greater than that of the economy, with gross value added per worker at £62,000 for arts and culture, compared to £46,800 for the wider UK economy.

Although we do not hold detailed accurate figures specifically for our district, given the profile of the arts, culture and heritage in West Berkshire we can reasonably state this district benefits economically from cultural heritage. Therefore, it is crucial we continue to support our organisations, small and medium enterprises (SME's), and individuals in the cultural heritage sectors. Given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic this has never been more important.



*The Hound of the Baskervilles in the Watermill Theatre Garden.
Pamela Raith Photography*

¹⁶https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/downloadfile/Economic%20impact%20of%20arts%20and%20culture%20on%20the%20national%20economy%20FINAL_0_0.PDF

Cultural heritage is not just about income generation. There is strong, growing evidence which indicates its importance to peoples' health and wellbeing. Through this strategy, we aim to strengthen partnership working, and continue to develop and increase the arts and heritage projects/programmes which provide a range of benefits to all. We will increase initiatives which specifically deliver on health and wellbeing, led and delivered by the district cultural heritage sector, with a specific focus on those identified in West Berkshire Vision 2036¹⁷.

All arts and cultural activities are significantly associated with happiness and relaxation. In research conducted by Fujiwara and MacKerron published by Arts Council England, Cultural Activities, Artforms and Wellbeing, 2015¹⁸, these types of activities ranked highly.

Activities people participate in	Percentage of survey respondents
Theatre, dance, concert	8.735
Singing, performing	7.731
Exhibition, museum, library	7.457
Hobbies, arts, crafts	5.737
Talking, chatting socialising	3.789
Drinking alcohol	3.646
Listening to music	3.518
Childcare, playing with children	2.888
Reading	2.331
Watching TV, film	2.084
Housework, chores, DIY	-0.651

Activities people participate in	Percentage of survey respondents
Exhibition, museum, library	6.017
Hobbies, arts, crafts	4.618
Theatre, dance, concert	4.483
Singing, performing	4.171
Reading	4.124
Drinking alcohol	4.045
Watching TV, film	3.562
Listening to music	3.027
Talking, chatting, socialising	2.859
Childcare, playing with children	0.877
Housework, chores, DIY	-3.668

West Berkshire has a range of heritage settings such as museums, historic houses, archives, heritage landscapes, residential areas and towns with historic buildings. There is strong evidence to suggest that creative and heritage related activity in a heritage environment, healthcare setting, day to day exposure to one or more of these settings, or volunteering in a heritage setting, have a range of benefits to people's health and wellbeing¹⁹.

People across our district value our heritage. A recent report regarding public perceptions of heritage²⁰ published by the National Heritage Lottery Fund found the most important aspects of heritage with the highest levels of support are:

- museums/libraries/archives (83%).
- historic buildings/monuments (82%).
- land/natural heritage (81%).

Although these figures are for the UK, they echo those on a regional level and present a clear indication that residents consider our heritage to be of value.

¹⁷<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=46989&p=0>

¹⁸https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Cultural_activities_artforms_and_wellbeing.pdf

¹⁹<https://www.whatworkswellbeing.org/theimpactofhistoricplacesandassetsoncommunitywellbeing>

²⁰<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/public-perceptions-heritage>

Strategic Themes

There are six strategic themes.

Sustainability and Economic Development should be considered as a joint priority and given their importance in terms of economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic are likely to require more urgent attention.

Without sustaining (Sustainability) our cultural heritage sector through, increased partnership working resulting in greater access to external funding, and generating new income streams through initiatives such as tourism, increasing visitor numbers and spend (Economic Development), we will be unable to deliver on other themes identified through consultation and outlined in this strategy. Much of West Berkshire's rich and diverse cultural heritage sector, a highly valuable asset, will diminish resulting in a loss of expertise, venues, and talent, all of which are central to the objectives and aims in this strategy, and those identified in other West Berkshire strategies such as West Berkshire Vision 2036.

The themes are interlinked with the need for residents to be able to access cultural heritage for the purposes of health and wellbeing, education and enjoyment. For example, our historic environment is a unique part of West Berkshire from listed buildings to the character of the landscape. Conserving and raising awareness of it for now and future generations is important.

“Our historic environment is a unique part of West Berkshire from listed buildings to the character of the landscape. Conserving and raising awareness of it for now and future generations is important.”



Donnington Castle, photo courtesy of English Heritage.

Sustainability

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that, for many, cultural heritage is key to their health and wellbeing. It provides a creative way of connecting with others, reducing social isolation, providing creative activities and new skills (either for the first time or rediscovery). More people are accessing local green spaces and going for walks in their towns and villages, therefore the historic environment has never been more important as a way of reducing the negative impacts of the virus on health and wellbeing.

Whilst this is a positive result, there has and continues to be a significant cost to the cultural heritage sector starting with the national lockdown, and the subsequent restrictions on public gatherings, performances, screenings and tourism of which the districts cultural heritage sector plays a role. With the roll-out of vaccines it is hoped that this will improve throughout 2021.

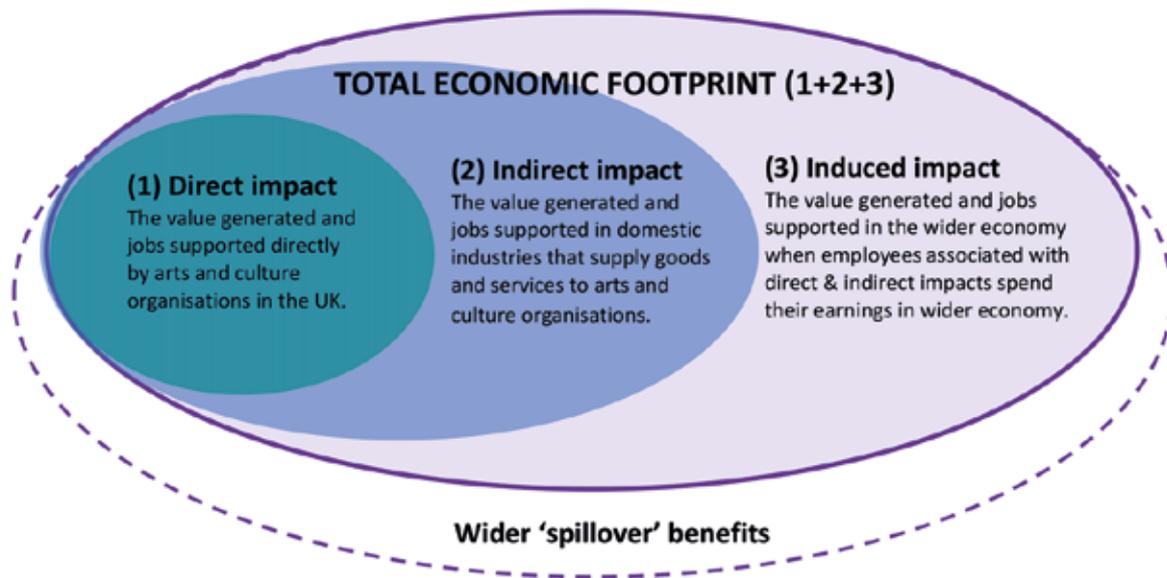
As already noted, a priority must be the survival of our cultural heritage sector. Whilst organisations such as the Corn Exchange (Newbury) Trust, Zippo Circus, Cirque Berserk Ltd have been successful in gaining a grant through the Arts Council England Cultural Recovery Fund²¹, this only goes part way in supporting them and there is still much to be done. It should be taken into consideration that many organisations, small and medium enterprises (SME's) and individuals have been unable to access financial support. This was evidenced through the results of the stakeholder consultation with only 24.1% reporting they were eligible to apply for financial support, with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme being the second most applied for scheme (23.1 %); 'other' was cited as the first with responders choosing not to specify the source of support.

Economic Development and Sustainability are linked, and the promotion of the district's cultural heritage specifically in relation to tourism and income generation is one element of the strategic approach to supporting and increasing the economic resilience of the sector. Tourism requires a phased approach, with short, medium, and longer-term planning and delivery. This inward investment represents an opportunity for the cultural heritage sector, working with local businesses, tourism providers, and partners to develop and increase resilience over the course of this strategy.

One aspect of the economic development theme of this strategy, which was supported by results from the consultation with residents and partners, and is related to increasing visitor numbers to the district, is increasing public awareness of 'the wealth and diversity of cultural heritage activities, events and places across the district'. The extent and form this takes will be identified through partnership working in the development of the Delivery Plan. There are examples of how local authorities have successfully undertaken the branding and marketing of their districts/counties. These will be reviewed as part of the project planning process should this action be ratified.

²¹<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/culture-recovery-fund-grants>

The cultural heritage sector has a far-reaching impact on the economy, and to protect and support it, is to protect and support the wider economic ecology of the district.



Source: Cebr analysis

Wider multiplier impacts of the arts and culture industry²²:

Gross Value Added (GVA) measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector. When indirect (supply chain) and induced (wider spending) effects are considered, it is estimated that the arts and culture industry (including both market and non-market elements) supported £48bn in turnover, £23bn in GVA, 363,713 jobs and £13.4bn in employee compensation in 2016.

This implies:

- For every £1 in turnover directly generated by the arts and culture industry, an additional £1.24 in output is supported in the wider economy through indirect and induced multipliers.
- For every £1 of GVA generated by the arts and culture industry, an additional £1.14 of GVA is supported in the wider economy through indirect and induced multipliers.
- For every 1 job directly created by the arts and culture industry, an additional 1.65 jobs are supported in the wider economy through indirect and induced multipliers.
- For every £1 in employee compensation paid to workers directly employed in the arts and culture industry, an additional £1.21 in employee compensation is supported in the wider economy through indirect and induced multipliers.

²²https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Economic%20impact%20of%20arts%20and%20culture%20on%20the%20national%20economy%20FINAL_0_0.PDF



Source: ONS, Cebr analysis

The cultural heritage sector has a strong track record in partnership working. West Berkshire has the breadth and diversity of organisations, individuals and businesses to develop joint initiatives, and to undertake, where appropriate, increased cross sector strategic schemes. By doing so there is scope to attract inward investment and access external funding from a range of sources.

Examples include:

- Cultural heritage organisations working more collaboratively with Clinical Commissioning Groups, to lead, create and deliver targeted health and wellbeing programmes (i.e. Mental health, dementia) and the potential to trial arts and health initiatives to assist in recovery from Covid-19.
- Covid-19 has created an increased need for social prescribing as evidenced by The National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) being awarded £5 million in funding to support people to stay connected and maintain their health and wellbeing. The NASP will be working with, amongst others, Arts Council England and Natural England, to develop and deliver 'Covid-19 specific' initiatives.
- Cultural heritage organisations working with Leisure, and healthcare providers to develop and deliver creative health walks, facilitating access to our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the historic environment combined with participation in creative activities (for example, painting and photography).
- Increased collaboration with higher education institutions (HEI's) provides opportunities for accessing funds both directing through universities and through grants (for example, the Arts and Humanities Research Council) and associated inward investment through business partnerships. HEI's can access funding often not available directly to the cultural heritage sector for 'non-academic' activities. However, through partnership working there is scope to create, trial and develop innovative cultural heritage projects.

In so doing we not only have the potential to develop high quality initiatives, maximise existing resources, we sustain the areas of cultural heritage sector, providing employment opportunities.

- Use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)²³ is one way in which we can work with partners to raise funds from developers. Although, much of this capital is used to support new facilities it is possible to bid for cultural heritage work and, or create opportunities for the inclusion of for example, public art within new developments as part of placemaking schemes. Whilst the forthcoming review of the planning system may impact on this it is worth including it in this strategy.

Summary of Sustainability Objectives, Aims and Actions

OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
Ensure our cultural and heritage organisations are as sustainable as possible and can thrive.	Provide support and increased economic resilience for organisations, small and medium enterprises (SME's) and individuals in the cultural heritage sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase inward investment through joint initiatives and external funding. • Increase and develop joined up working between organisations and effective strategic partnership working.



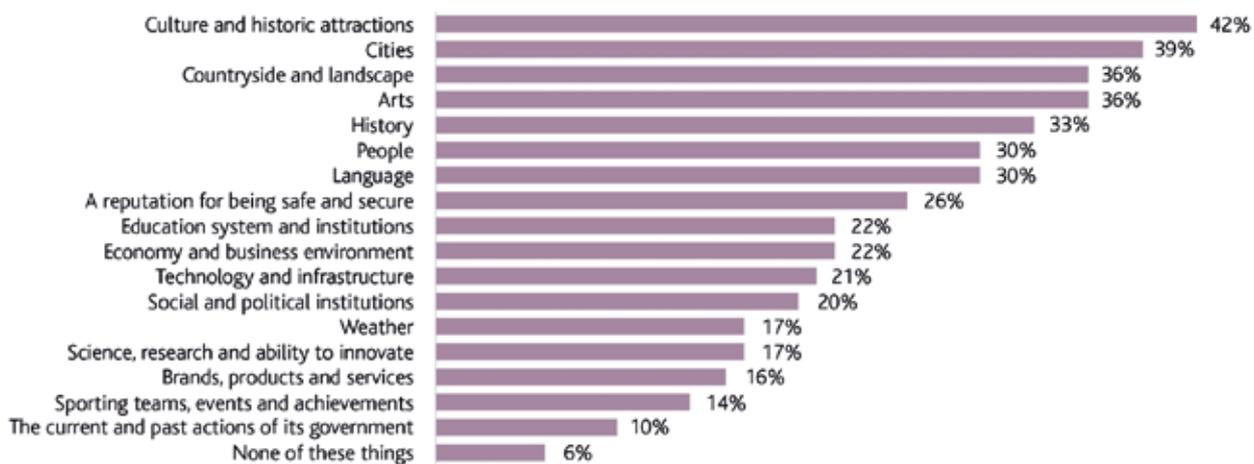
The Pheonix Resource Centre

²³<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/>

Economic Development

‘Visitors don’t make a culture and heritage distinction – they don’t think “Oh I’m visiting a castle now which is heritage and a contemporary gallery now which is cultural”. They just want to visit and be immersed in both the contemporary and historical culture of a place to feel that they understand and know it better²⁴.’

Research by the British Council shows that cultural attractions are the most commonly mentioned factor in terms of what makes the UK an attractive place to visit while the arts were the fourth most commonly mentioned reason²⁵.



Source: Department for Culture, Media & Sport *The Culture White Paper*

Heritage tourism accounts £2.0 billion per year²⁶ (2019) in the South East, with £7.6 billion being attributed to the arts and culture tourism across the UK (2011)²⁶.

Developing our tourism offer in relation to cultural heritage has the potential to generate income into the sector as a whole through visits to museums, historic houses, galleries, theatres, performances, festivals, and increasing secondary spend via for example, retail (for example, merchandise, work created by artists/craftspersons), and food and drink.

44% of visitors to Britain are motivated by cultural attractions and the economic impact of cultural tourism is substantial – in 2016 alone, overseas visitors spent £889m on Museums and galleries in the UK²⁸.

There has been an increase in the demand for experiential tourism (engaging with local history and culture). The local cultural and heritage sector is well placed to offer a range of interesting, exciting and attractive experiences which generate income and raise the profile of what West Berkshire has to offer.

²⁴<https://englandscreativecoast.org/2017/12/01/cultural-tourism-why-bother/>

²⁵British Council <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/as-others-see-us-report.pdf>

²⁶<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/>

²⁷https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Value_arts_culture_evidence_review.pdf

²⁸<https://visitenglanddiscoverengland/summaryinsightsonoverseasvisitorstoenglandsregions/august2016>

Whilst there is a need to protect our natural environment and control numbers which could negatively impact on the landscape, ecology and visitor experience (through crowded paths and increase noise levels, there is potential to attract visitors whilst managing numbers.

Cultural Heritage tourism not only generates income to the sector itself but has a positive impact on the economy through supporting local pubs, restaurants, hotels, B&B's, and retail. A strong economy is advantageous to the cultural heritage sector directly and indirectly. An example of this is Sussex Modern²⁹ which promotes the landscape, arts, culture, and vineyards of Sussex, providing visitors (both domestic and international) with information, trails, and 'packages' with visits to for example winemakers and/or galleries for an experiential trip including i.e. creative sessions, wine tasting and or dinner.

The Local Government Association refer to the 'pulling power' of arts and culture: visitors to a theatre, museum, or festival spend money on their ticket or entrance fee, meals in local restaurants, spending in local shops, or perhaps hotel bookings as part of their visit. The 500,000 visitors to the Hepworth Wakefield Museum during its first year contributed an estimated £10 million to the local economy in Wakefield and a recent economic impact of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park estimated its annual contribution to the local economy to be £5 million³⁰ (LGA, 2013).

Whilst international tourism is currently (2020) on the downturn due to the pandemic, it is hoped that during the life of this strategy the situation will improve. The pandemic has led to an increase in domestic tourism and West Berkshire is well placed to take advantage of this.

There is an increase in what is termed 'microgapping'³¹ – experiential holidays for domestic holiday makers. Supported and marketed by Visit Britain. This is due to a number of factors including: Redundancies and reduced wages mean that people are no longer looking for long or expensive holidays, and the UK offers a more financially safe option³².

Holidays within the UK are not only a financially safer option for most, but many people will find staying with the UK to be a less stressful option as there are less concerns about local health advice differing from home.

46% of trips within the UK in 2019 were to large towns and cities. This has now changed and it is likely that travel habits will change significantly in the short term due to people avoiding crowded spaces where you need to be in close quarters with other people, even when new vaccines are available for all³³.

Another consideration is climate change and the environmental impact of long-distance travel.

In the 25-49 age group, 30% say they would consider swapping a holiday abroad for one in the UK to reduce the impact of travel on the environment, a 2% increase over just 6 months³⁴.

²⁹<https://www.sussexmodern.org.uk>

³⁰https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Value_arts_culture_evidence_review.pdf

³¹<https://trade.visitbritain.com/destination-uk/microgapping-uk/#page-2>

³²<https://www.schofields.ltd.uk/staycations-uk-travel-2020-21/>

³³<https://www.schofields.ltd.uk/staycations-uk-travel-2020-21/>

³⁴<https://yougov.co.uk/>

Visit Britain/Visit England³⁵ (a non-departmental body funded by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) has, and continues to invest in tourism, with initiatives such as Discover England. Funding³⁶ worth £40m has been made available to develop new bookable English tourism products. Bookable products are something that can be booked by a visitor. Examples include, a vineyard tour, a visit to a castle, a behind the scenes experience. These 'products/experiences' are open to anyone wishing to book and are therefore available to domestic and international travellers. Cultural heritage organisations (and others such as breweries, wildlife and nature conservation, sporting) have benefitted from this funding and the wider opportunities it presents to generate income.

Examples of successful projects specifically relating to the cultural heritage sector, leading to increased footfall resulting in income generation, including those delivered across districts/counties include. England's Creative Coast³⁷ (funded by Visit England, Arts Council England Cultural Destinations Fund, South East LEP, and local authorities) builds on the success of Margate's Turner Contemporary Gallery which in its first year of trading was responsible for generating £13.9m across the Kent economy³⁸. England's Creative Coast aims to grow the South East visitor economy by 3% by 2020³⁹ with a range of visitor 'attractions' and experiences, marketed in a coherent and targeted manner.

'When it comes to selecting a holiday destination culture and heritage was found to be an important element'

Source: HPI research, Leveraging Britain's Culture & Heritage.

In 2019 Reading was the 20th most visited destination by domestic tourists, with 237,000 visitors Oxford was 9th with 581,000, with London ranked highest with 21,713,000⁴⁰.

Given West Berkshire's proximity, its cultural heritage and wider offer. It is feasible to suggest that through this strategy, this district can benefit from tourism, supported by inward investment through Visit Britain/Visit England, and related schemes, to generate income and increase resilience by expanding revenue streams.

'Visitors should be encouraged to take advantage of the brilliant things that West Berkshire has to offer.'

Local resident responding to public consultation.



Thatcham Festival

³⁵<https://www.visitbritain.org>

³⁶<https://trade.visitbritain.com/destination-uk/discover-england-fund/>

³⁷<https://www.englishcreativecoast.com>

³⁸https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/infographics/Evidence_review_Infographic_March_2014.jpg

³⁹<https://englishcreativecoast.org/about/>

⁴⁰<https://www.visitbritain.org/town-data>

Heritage tourism in numbers



Source: Cebr, 2019b

Summary of Economic Development Objectives, Aims and Actions

OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
Increase domestic and international tourism to generate income, investment and increase economic resilience.	Promote and raise awareness to potential visitors, of the wealth and diversity of culture and heritage. For example: historic buildings and landscapes, events and creative industries in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships and programmes across cultural, heritage, landscape and tourism sectors to create experiential tourism opportunities. • Increase public awareness of the wealth and diversity of cultural and heritage activities, events and places across the district. • Develop partnerships including with Destination Management Organisations, to create and promote experiential tourism opportunities and promote these to tourism providers. • Research and seek financial support from external funders / investors to develop tourism.

Health & Wellbeing

Cultural heritage has an important role to play in the health and wellbeing of people of all ages. Those who had attended a cultural place or event in the previous 12 months (pre-Corvid-19) were almost 60 per cent more likely to report good health compared to those who had not, and theatre-goers were almost 25 per cent more likely to report good health⁴¹.

There is evidence which supports this both in terms of ‘the prevention of mental and physical illness [and] enhancing quality of life from engagement with the arts⁴².

There is also strong evidence on the benefits of arts engagement for cognition in older age, including memory, executive function, and that the arts can reduce physical decline in older adults, including improving gait, strength and balance⁴³.

Museums and heritage settings have an equally important part in creating and delivery initiatives for which there is strong evidence regarding the benefits to health and wellbeing. There are many examples. National Museums Liverpool run dementia friendly Memory Walks which not only increase physical exercise but elicit group reminiscence that becomes part of a shared cultural heritage with important implications for collective wellbeing⁴⁴.

Such sharing plays a vital role in place making and there are examples of where reminiscences have then formed part of a wider project to create plays, performed at local venues and aired on radio as is the case with a project in Oxford⁴⁵.

‘I think the current pandemic has taught us all the importance of the arts in providing people with an outlet for their concerns. I am aware that, for example, music can be a great help for people with dementia.’

Local resident responding to public consultation.

Nationally, it has been estimated that there are approximately 255,000 young carers and 110,000 carers themselves over the age of 85. As noted in the 2014 NHS Five Year Forward View, ‘the five and a half million carers in England make a critical and underappreciated contribution not only to loved ones, neighbours and friends, but to the very sustainability of the NHS itself⁴⁶.

⁴¹<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/exploring-value-arts-and-culture/value-arts-and-culture-people-and-society>

⁴²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918253/The_role_of_arts_in_improving_health_and_wellbeing.pdf

⁴³https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918253/The_role_of_arts_in_improving_health_and_wellbeing.pdf

⁴⁴<http://www.houseofmemories.co.uk/things-to-do/memorywalks>

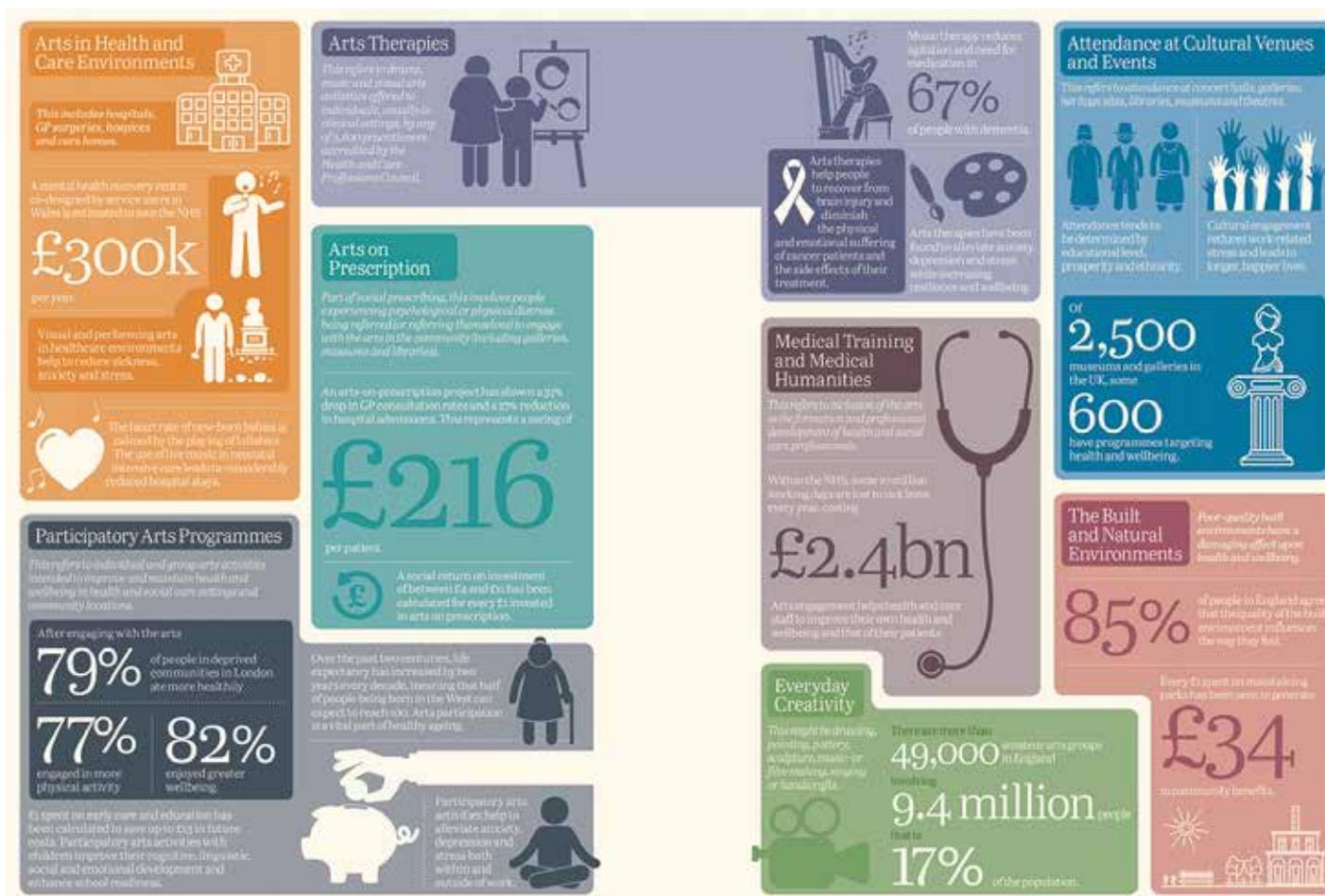
⁴⁵<http://www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/case-studies/museum-oxford-morris-motors-centenary-reminiscence-project>

⁴⁶www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/5yfv-web.pdf

‘Ongoing research is demonstrating that access to programmes which incorporate arts- and healthbased interventions leads to increased independence, improved self-esteem, confidence and resilience and allows individuals to build a peer support network.’⁴⁷

Rebecca Johnson, Occupational Therapist and Clinical Lead, Breathe Arts Health Research (originally part of Guy’s and St Thomas’ Charity; now a social enterprise that designs and delivers arts-in-healthcare programmes).

Carers are often struggling financially, restricted as to where and when they can go out, and have limited time or energy to spend on themselves away from their caring duties. As a result their health is poor (87% of carers report poor mental health, 83% poor physical health), 91% report suffering from depression and anxiety, and they are often socially isolated⁴⁸. Poor wellbeing in carers also has a knock-on effect on the people they care for, so there are real benefits in supporting carers. Museums, galleries and theatres are all well placed to support them through a range of activities designed specifically for target groups, or as is sometimes the case (for example: Birmingham Museums Creative Carers Programme) schemes to support carers and those they care for.



Source: Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing.

⁴⁷<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Arts-Health-and-Wellbeing-Briefing.pdf>

⁴⁸<https://museumsandwellbeingalliance.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/museums-as-spaces-for-wellbeing-a-second-report.pdf>

Social prescribing- the prescription of creative and cultural activities by health care professionals, and other referral services, to people experiencing anxiety, stress-related symptoms, depression or other mental and physical health problems⁴⁹ is now an established initiative with seven social prescribers working across the district.

This structured and targeted approach is proven to be an effective means of tackling a range of health and wellbeing difficulties. The cultural heritage sector is constantly creating and delivering programmes, successfully supporting patients, and alleviating pressure on other healthcare services. Our communities across the district, benefit from this provision and the pandemic has generated an increased need for social prescribing initiatives with a particular focus on for example, singing, movement and physical exercise and access to green spaces. Our cultural heritage sector is well placed to work in partnership with Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to respond.

When I first heard about the Social Prescribing Service, I immediately felt it would play an important part in delivering holistic care to my patients, and indeed it has⁵⁰

Dr Doon Lovett, who is based at Tilehurst Surgery.

Volunteers are a valuable asset to our cultural heritage organisations, many of whom could not function without them. However, there is also evidence that volunteering in cultural heritage settings has a range of positive effects on people's health and wellbeing. This includes reducing social isolation, improved cognitive function (i.e. learning new skills), with many experiencing a greater sense of safety in their day to day lives as they feel part of their community.

This feeds into the importance of our cultural heritage sector and the need to protect and support it, as outlined in the Sustainability strand of this strategy.

Culture and Connections' at Ripon Museum Trust is a supported volunteering programme organised on social prescribing lines with people of all ages with mental health issues such as social isolation, anxiety and lack of confidence. This is an example of how volunteer schemes can be developed in partnership with healthcare providers to increase positive health and wellbeing outcomes⁵¹.

We know that our natural landscape is of great importance to the local community. West Berkshire benefits from having a range of open spaces including historic parks and gardens, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Specific Scientific Interest. These are an important asset for local people to enjoy as a leisure activity, bringing benefits to health and wellbeing.

Accessible outdoor space is often referred to as 'Green Infrastructure' or 'GI'. Natural England, provides helpful information on the multiple benefits of effectively using and protecting the landscape/open spaces and we will seek to employ this as part of our Cultural Heritage Strategy and Delivery Plan, linking in with West Berkshire Leisure⁵², and Environment⁵³ Strategies.

⁴⁹<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate>

⁵⁰<https://www.berkshwestccg.nhs.uk/newsroom/news/posts/2019/2019/march/social-prescribing/>

⁵¹www.riponmuseums.co.uk/events/special_projects/culture_and_connections_at_ripon_museums

⁵²NOT CURRENTLY ON WBC WEBSITE SO NO LINK AVAILABLE

⁵³<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=49068&p=0>

National surveys that monitor engagement in the natural environment⁵⁴ show that between 2009 and 2019 the majority of people are motivated to visit the natural environment for health and exercise, with the age group 16-34 the smallest (23.7%), over 55's (32.06%) and the largest participating age group being 35-54 (44.24%). Local residents who do spend time in the natural outdoors do so regularly, reporting either 'once a week' (21.94%), 'several times a week' (24.2%) or every day' (12.72%).

Greater numbers of people across different sectors of the population are now visiting the natural outdoors than ever before. With the pandemic and resulting 'lockdown' the desire to access the natural environment increased. Therefore, the need to work with colleagues in Leisure, and Countryside Service to increase access to our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and historic landscapes, parks and gardens is important, as is appropriately maintaining and protecting these important areas.

Exposure to cultural heritage (for example landscape, historic buildings, performing, visual arts, museums) and, or participation in cultural heritage activities is beneficial to people's health and wellbeing.

For others, a more structured approach is required, and through this strategy we aim to work with partners to increase and develop existing provision, and create new initiatives with a particular focus on those identified in the West Berkshire Vision 2036⁵⁵.

Over 60% of respondents to the public consultation felt that the arts and heritage are important to health and wellbeing.

'It would be good to have more (cultural heritage activities) especially for people with dementia.'

Local resident responding to public consultation.

Summary of Health and Wellbeing Objectives, Aims and Actions

OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group.
Contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of all our residents.	Develop the cultural and heritage sector to meet short, medium, and long-term needs of residents, taking a lifespan approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic partnerships. • Develop and deliver effective projects and programmes which meet health and wellbeing priorities as identified in council and health service strategic plans. • Increase access to culture and heritage for our rural and urban communities including children and young people.

⁵⁴<https://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2f24d6c942d44e81821c3ed2d4ab2ada>

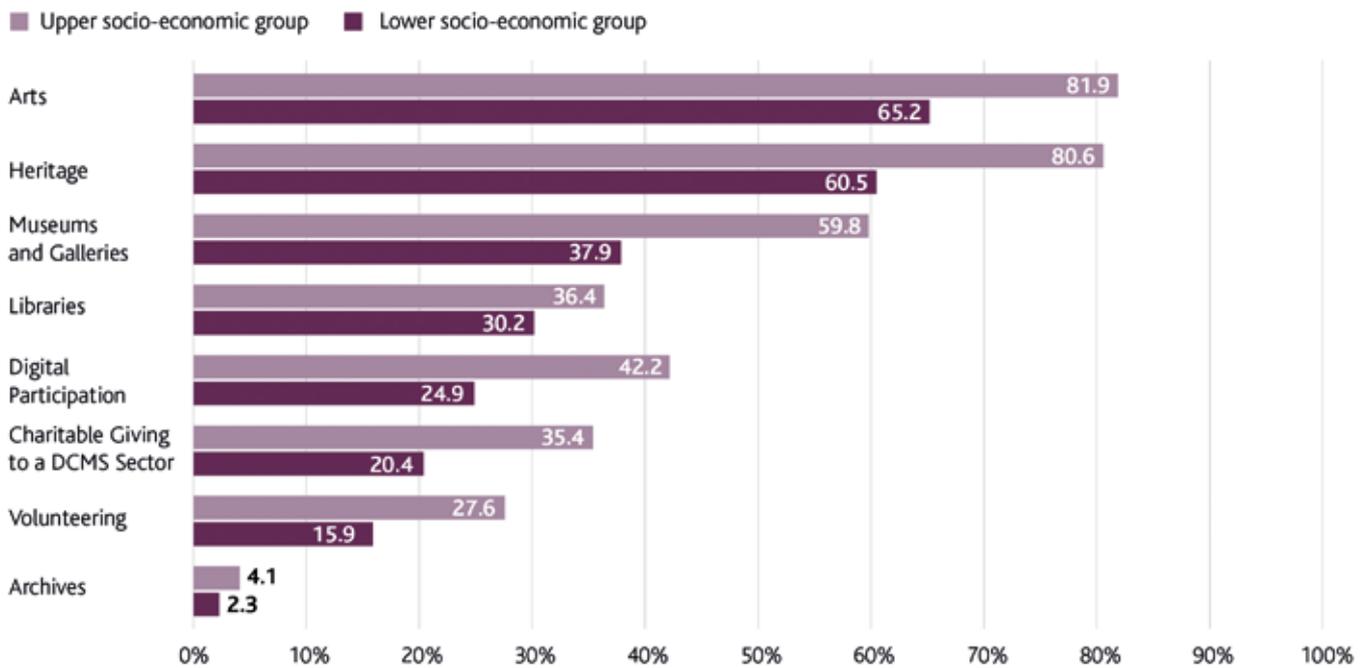
⁵⁵REFERENCE VISION 2036

Access

Access to cultural heritage activities varies across the district, with some residents having fewer opportunities to participate than others.

‘Everyone should have the chance to experience culture, participate in it, create it, and see their lives transformed by it’⁵⁶

Participation in culture is often significantly lower among those from a lower socio-economic background (as defined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation⁵⁷. Disability, age, limited/no access to public transport are also factors which can create barriers to participation.)



Source: Department for Culture, Media & Sport The Culture White Paper

⁵⁶https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper__3_.pdf

⁵⁷https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper__3_.pdf



Ace Space music festival hosted by Shaw House, Newbury

Those living in rural communities (Defra, ONS classifications and local authority classifications⁵⁸) face difficulties, particularly if combined with one or more of the above. Factors identified by the Arts Council England Rural Evidence and Data Review 2019⁵⁹. This has been echoed by responders to the public and stakeholder consultation undertaken as part of the development of this strategy.

‘It would be good to be able to access these things (cultural heritage activities), particularly in rural areas’

Local resident responding to public consultation.

We know there are a range of benefits to participation in cultural heritage activities. It is therefore important that through this strategy we seek to improve access for those who want to enjoy such activities. This is not necessarily straightforward or easy to resolve, however, we aim to improve access. One of the first steps the Delivery Group will take will be to better understand what residents (particularly those from rural areas) would like to access/participate in, and then find solutions to barriers. Through the Delivery Plan we will take a phased and focussed approach.

Taking into consideration the current restrictions in place due to Covid-19 we need to work in a more imaginative way, this means taking a varied approach working with local specialists in digital, gaming and publishing creating safe online activity, combined with other participatory programmes which are accessible for those without the internet. If we do not take this route, we will not deliver on the objective to reduce inequality of access.

Summary of Access Objectives, Aims and Actions

OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
To strive to create equality of opportunity for residents to access the district’s cultural heritage and activities.	Improve access to the district’s cultural heritage and activities through a variety of measures, responding to need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to existing cultural heritage activities. • Create new accessible activities responding to demand . • Develop the above with a specific focus initially for those in rural locations with limited/no access to transport with restricted mobility (for example, disability) and, or health considerations.

⁵⁸<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-rural-urban-definition>

⁵⁹<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/community-and-place/rural-evidence-and-data-review>

Education, Training and Employment

The inclusion of arts and culture in education from pre-school onwards is important. It provides those who have strengths in these subjects equivalent opportunities for learning, academic achievement, and the option to pursue a career in this diverse and varied sector (for example. design, architecture, publishing, digital, gaming, artists, performers, makers, arts administrators, senior managers, and chief executives), and for all pupils to gain a range of skills.

Evidence shows that engaging in culture can increase the likelihood of a young person going on to further and higher education⁶⁰. One study showed that 16-18 year olds who participated in the arts and those who visited heritage sites or libraries were more likely to go on to further education in subsequent years⁶¹. There is a range of data showing a clear relationship between culture and educational attainment.

Inclusion of arts and culture in education has been proven to enable pupils to gain for example, strong communication skills, confidence, increased team working; and for some a route to re-engage with education.

Despite this we know that, as with general access to cultural heritage, not all children and young people have equality of opportunity when it comes to arts and culture in school/education settings. This is particularly the case for those from deprived backgrounds.

‘We know that there is startling evidence that those from the most educationally deprived backgrounds are least likely to engage with cultural activities, perpetuating the cycle of exclusion’.

Darren Henley, CEO of Arts Council England.

Initiatives such as Arts Awards⁶² and Artsmark⁶³ (managed by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England), led in West Berkshire, by Artswork⁶⁴ (Arts Council England Bridge Organisation), can provide schools, Pupil Referral Units, and alternative education provision with a structured programme to deliver arts initiatives with support and guidance.

Arts Awards not only benefit pupils/participants but provide opportunities for informal Continued Professional Development, for example teachers and employment for professionals within the cultural heritage sector. Successful completion of a Gold Level Arts Award can assist with application for higher education courses and in some instances relate to UCAS points. This is one example of how the cultural heritage can be supported in schools and other settings with children and young people. It should be noted that Arts Awards can be offered by other organisations providing access and a range of options for children and young people. The settings include: Museums, libraries, galleries, arts centres, theatres, heritage organisations, performing groups, youth centres, in addition to youth justice settings, and healthcare services.

⁶⁰https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/304896/Quantifying_the_Social_Impacts_of_Culture_and_Sport.pdf.

⁶¹https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/446273/Health_and_educational_benefits_of_sport_and_culture.pdf

⁶²www.artsaward.org.uk

⁶³www.artsmark.org.uk

⁶⁴www.artswork.org.uk

The Artsmark Award is the only creative quality standard for schools and education settings, accredited by Arts Council England. This programme supports settings to develop and celebrate their commitment to arts and cultural education.

In 2015, the programme was refreshed to align with School Improvement Plans and support core EBacc (English Baccalaureate) and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) priorities, giving the curriculum breadth and balance.

There are a number of advantages for schools and other education settings in undertaking and gaining an Artsmark Award:

- Build young people's confidence, character and resilience through arts and cultural education.
- Support the health and wellbeing of pupils through arts and culture.
- Strengthen pupil voice and develop young people's leadership skills through Artsmark.
- Settings can use Artsmark's clear and flexible framework to embed creativity across the whole curriculum and use it to address school improvement priorities.
- Celebrate schools and education settings long-term commitment to cultural education with pupils, parents and your local community.
- Access professional support, advice and resources to strengthen your arts provision.

Artsmark and Ofsted:

- Meet Ofsted's requirements for Quality of Education by using the Artsmark framework to maintain a broad and ambitious curriculum that connects learning across all subjects.
- Equip pupils with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life and nurture their imagination and creativity through a high-quality arts and cultural education.
- Artsmark clearly demonstrates how you support personal development and provides evidence to Ofsted on how you meet its spiritual, moral, social, cultural requirements.

Artsmark is open to primary, secondary and special schools, pupil referral units, youth offending teams and sixth form colleges.

Through this strategy we will seek to support schools and education settings in gaining an Artsmark Award. The Delivery Plan Board will be tasked with considering and planning this aspect of the strategy, taking into consideration challenges faced by the education and associated sector's as a result of Covid-19.



Code Club at West Berkshire Libraries.

It is important to recognise that schools, Pupil Referral Units and alternative education settings currently employ artists, cultural heritage organisations, and/or artists to design and deliver extracurricular activities, however, there is no data available. Arts Awards are just one way in which children and young people can and should be able to access cultural heritage, and a 'one size fits all' approach is not the answer.

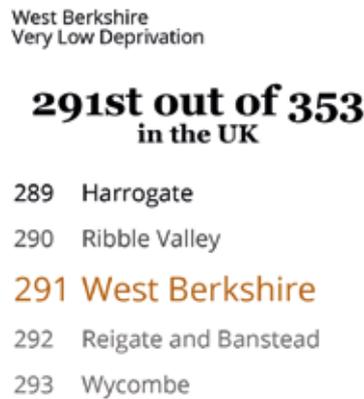
The Local Cultural Education Partnership⁶⁵ model piloted by Arts Council England and now adopted by over 90 cities/counties/districts in England is an effective mechanism to create a meaningful partnership approach, delivering initiatives and projects which respond to the needs of children and young people in that specific area. West Berkshire currently has no such partnership in place. This strategy, through the delivery plan, will explore options for the formation of this or a similar body.

Source: ACE Cultural Education Portal for West Berkshire.⁶⁶

Number of Children & Young People



Multiple Index of Deprivation Ranking



Number of National Portfolio Organisations



Local Authority investment in Arts & Culture



Grants for the Arts for Young People



Number of educational establishments



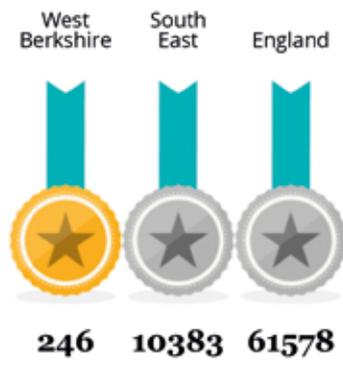
⁶⁵<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/children-and-young-people/working-partnership>

⁶⁶<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/research-and-data/children-and-young-people>

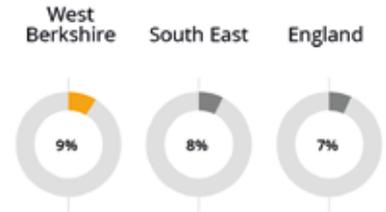
% of Schools with Artsmark Awards



Number of Children & Young People with Arts Award



GCSE entries in Arts Subjects



% of Children in Poverty



‘The arts and culture may not be the main economic driver within West Berkshire, but it still has a vital role to play in providing jobs and opportunity for all.’

Local resident responding to public consultation.

Through the provision and equality of access to high quality and varied cultural heritage activities and learning opportunities, we aim to support and nurture their talents, skills, and provide them with the choice to pursue cultural heritage studies. There are barriers to higher and further education which this strategy alone is unable to tackle. However, through this strategy we aim to link with the council's Vision 2036⁶⁷ and Economic Development Strategy⁶⁸ to support local businesses and colleges in offering apprenticeships including the new T Level pathway, and the development of the cultural heritage sector with particular reference to small and medium enterprises (SME's) and new business development.

The cultural heritage sector is often thought of as not offering many opportunities for employment; however, this perception is dependent on which field being considered. For example, it is estimated that 11% of firms in the heritage sector have a skill gap in their workforce, and that 6% operate with at least one skill shortage. As a result, £140 million of potential GVA were lost in 2016.

This will in turn provide a strong economic environment for work-based training and employment. Whilst this strategy recognises there are particular challenges at present (2020) due to Covid-19, and a shrinking economy, over the life of this strategy the objectives and aims reading education, training and employment remain pertinent. Industries such as digital, gaming and publishing are considered likely to continue to grow. This combined with the objectives and aims under the economic development strand of this strategy, will provide employment opportunities across the wider cultural heritage sector.

'I personally have done an apprenticeship within West Berkshire (at a library), and it was incredibly valuable, leading to the career I now have. To have apprenticeships, higher education and training opportunities within arts and heritage help establish not only skills for individuals, but a sense of community belonging and engagement.'

Local resident responding to public consultation.

Summary of Education, Employment and Training Objectives, Aims and Actions

OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
Improve access to cultural education, learning and employment.	Support the education and cultural heritage sector to develop and deliver arts and creative learning opportunities, training, and career progression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote opportunities for apprenticeships and paid internships, through partnerships with local cultural and heritage organisations and businesses.

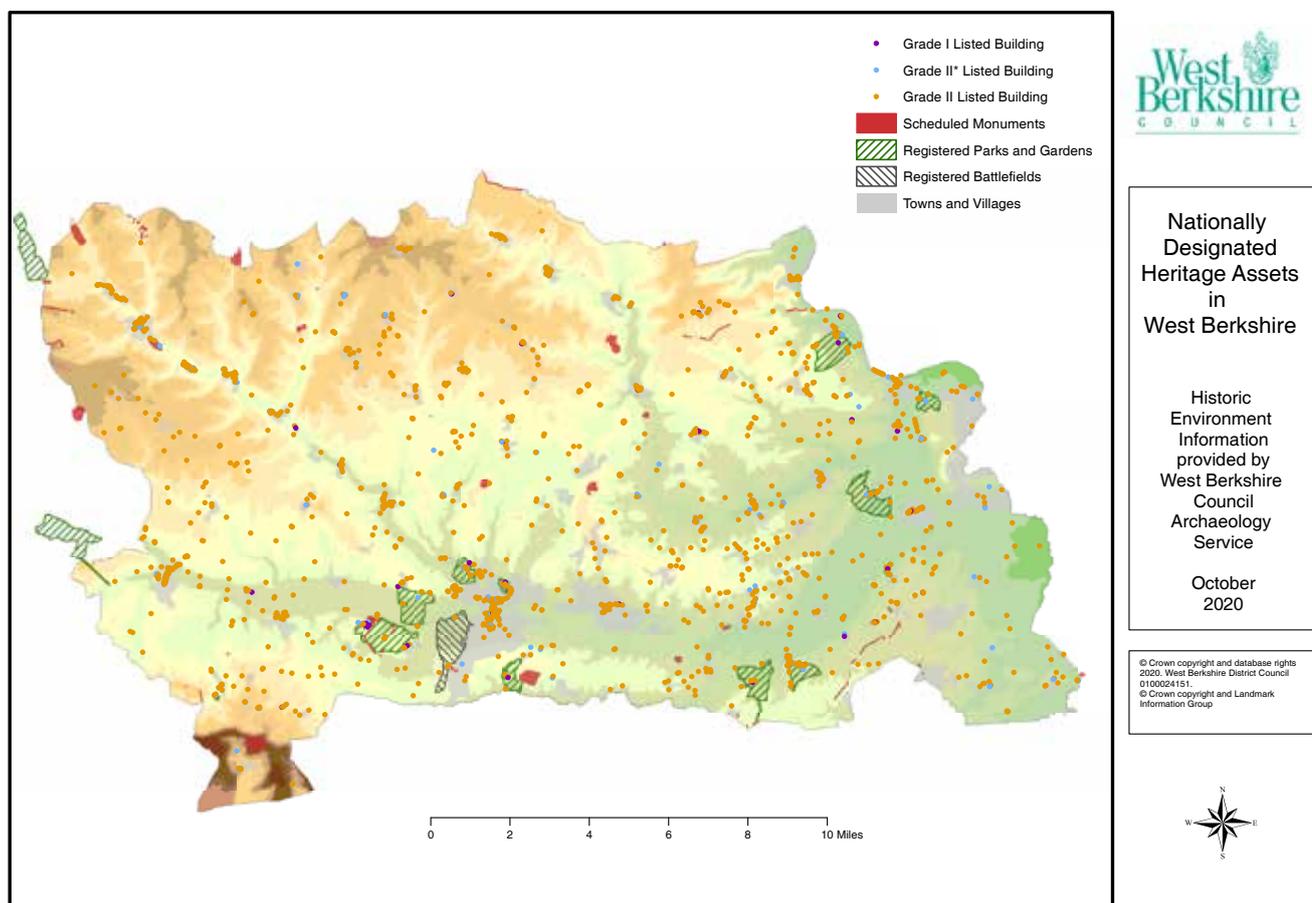
⁶⁷<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=46989&p=0>

⁶⁸<https://www.westberks.gov.uk>

Heritage and the Historic Environment

Through the consultation conducted as part of the development of this strategy we have evidence of the significance of the district's heritage and historic environment to communities and partners.

West Berkshire has a wealth of heritage assets with nearly a hundred Scheduled Monuments and just under two thousand Listed Buildings as well as several Registered Parks and Gardens and one Registered Battlefield⁶⁹. Much of the district is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)⁷⁰.



It is important these heritage assets are monitored and conserved. Through this strategy we aim to ensure they are protected for current and future generations. This provides an opportunity to work in partnership with local organisations and engage more widely with communities to promote the understanding and appreciation of the historic environment.

Historic England employs a designation / classification system for heritage assets. For example, historic buildings of significant importance to the national heritage are designated in a listing system – Grade I or Grade II Listed. Many features that make up West Berkshire's historic environment are important to the local heritage but do not meet the criteria for designation under Historic England's scheme. There are opportunities for local groups and residents to help record these as part of a "local listing" initiative to increase our appreciation of the richness of the local heritage.

For example, West Berkshire Council has been working in partnership with the West Berkshire Heritage Forum and local communities to compile a 'West Berkshire Local List of Heritage Assets⁷¹'. This initiative has enabled communities to identify and raise awareness of heritage assets that do not meet the criteria for national designation and raise awareness of them.

⁶⁹<https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/>

⁷⁰<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

⁷¹<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/loclist>

In addition to the physical cultural heritage in our landscape, towns and villages, there are objects held in collections of West Berkshire Museum⁷². Through display and interpretation, schools and public engagement programmes, residents and visitors of all ages have the opportunity to gain an increased understanding of the historic environment. It is important to enable as many people as possible, from a wide range of backgrounds, to be able to have access to these artefacts.

‘The protection and preservation of our culture and heritage is a singular opportunity to educate and provide enjoyment for our and future generations.’

Response to consultation.

Protecting and conserving our historic environment and heritage has proven wide ranging benefits which are interconnected with the other ‘themes’ included in this strategy and other West Berkshire strategies which seek to promote and improve health and wellbeing, economic development, leisure, and education. For example, studies have shown that visiting heritage sites is strongly associated with life satisfaction⁷³.

The value and Impact of Heritage and the Historic Environment⁷⁴



⁷²<https://www.westberkshireheritage.org/west-berkshire-museum>

⁷³<https://historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2014/heritage-and-wellbeing-pdf/>

⁷⁴<https://historicengland.org.uk/content/heritage-counts/pub/2014/heritage-infographic2-pdf/>

Volunteering on heritage projects and programmes has evidenced benefits to participants. A study by the National Lottery Heritage Fund found⁷⁵:

- Over 75% reported a significant increase in wellbeing after a year.
- Almost 60% reported long term sustained wellbeing improvements over two to three years.
- More than 30% of people gained employment or other new opportunities for getting into work.
- Participants also reported improvements in cognitive ability and an enhanced sense of belonging.

‘I can see life in a different way now, I don’t want to stay home, lonely and depressed any more. I want to get out there and get a job so that I can become more independent financially’⁷⁶

Through this strategy we aim to work in partnership with existing groups and organisations to increase the number and diversity of those undertaking volunteering in relation to the district’s historic environment.

There are examples of good practice which engage with young people and those from more diverse backgrounds in monitoring the condition of listed buildings. Winchester City Council Historic Environment Team gained funding and worked in partnership with Historic England, and community organisations to train young people to photograph and record designated and non-designated local historic assets. This information was then used to draw up a new listing and formed the basis for further assessment and future works according to condition and ‘risk’.

This scheme not only assisted in the monitoring and reporting of historic assets, it provided skills-based training for those young people involved, some of whom were not in education, employment or training.

Such schemes can attract external funding (for example, Historic England, and Natural England). Similar schemes, along with Historic Environment apprenticeships (funded via the Apprenticeship Levy) have been undertaken by for example, National Parks, and have created new partnerships, and increased the diversity of those volunteering and training in historic environment programmes.

The Heritage at Risk Register⁷⁷ produced by Historic England, is a record of heritage assets which are in decline. However, the majority of West Berkshire’s historic buildings are Listed as Grade II and are therefore not included in the national register.

As part of our aim to increase volunteering schemes, we will develop a programme with partners to undertake the recording and monitoring of Grade II listed buildings. This will provide West Berkshire Council with important data, create an opportunity to work with historic environment groups who have never previously volunteered in heritage activities, or would like to reconnect. For example, this could be a pilot “social prescribing” initiative, or an intergenerational scheme with young people mentored by older people with the relevant knowledge and experience.

‘Historic places matter – they help remind us of our past, bring communities together in the present with a shared sense of history, and can inspire our future through their beauty, interest, and potential for new uses. Creativity and heritage go hand in hand and can help engage people through new creative experiences and opportunities to connect with each other.’

Hilary McGrady, (former) Director-General, National Trust.

⁷⁵<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/news/heritage-volunteering-boosts-wellbeing>

⁷⁶<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/news/heritage-volunteering-boosts-wellbeing>

⁷⁷<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/>

Through this strategy we aim to develop more joined-up working with a range of organisations to engage a wider range of people, and enhance their understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of West Berkshire's historic and cultural assets and landscape.

There are numerous examples of how this is being done imaginatively and successfully:

- Researchers, developers and heritage producers are interested in the way video games allow millions of players around the world to play with and within the past and using games to engage students with history. This is known as archaeogaming⁷⁸ is just an example of a new approach to exploring archaeology through a digital game.
- Developers are also looking at new methods for conducting real archaeology in gaming environments. Augmented and virtual reality experiences are being developed by historic houses across the country, with a view to enhancing the visitor experience and diversity- Weston Park's augmented reality app 'The Enchanted Glen' and Castle Howard's hugely popular Christmas experience being a few examples. The Historic Royal Palaces and the National Trust have both invested in this new approach and have seen visitor numbers and diversity increase. West Berkshire is home to game developers and film production companies, and this provides an opportunity for us to not only present our historic environment in an engaging way, but to economically support the cultural heritage sector.

'Once lost these areas are hard, if impossible, to regenerate. In a time of difficulty the option to visit, learn about and experience culture, heritage and landscape can prove a lifeline to many and the economic benefits of such opportunities could be a major element in regeneration of our economy.'

Response to consultation.

The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (Nesta), Arts Council England, The National Heritage Lottery Fund, UK Research and Innovation Fund (Audience of the Future) continue to fund the research, trial, and delivery of such schemes, with Historic England supporting (through funding and training) the use of augmented reality (XR technology) to map and record the structures which are unsafe to enter, thus allowing for monitoring and for people to experience them as if at first hand.

Such initiatives provide opportunities to partner with the higher education sector, providing skills, expertise and access to funding (for example Arts and Humanities Research Council).

The digital route is not the only path and there are many examples of where artists, musicians, writers and so on have collaborated with the heritage sector to bring to life and engage a wider demographic, increase understanding, appreciate and enjoyment of the historic environment. Many of these projects/programmes have included 'residencies' or outreach work in community, healthcare, and/or education settings, increasing access.



Images L-R: © Cath Rawas/Hecate Arts

⁷⁸https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/InspiringCreativity_THAreport.pdf

A good example is a schools and community project which explored Cromford Mills, the home of Sir Richard Arkwright's first mill complex, birthplace of the modern factory system.

- A Creative Residency was established with workshops taking place at the mill, in schools and in the community. The project was based on the history of the mill, buildings created by Arkwright, stories connected with these sites, and of how the mill and Cromford families were affected by the War. Locally the path between the church and mill (both built by Arkwright) and is known as 'The Poppy Path' and 150 banners were created to line the pathway. Textiles and pigment were used to reflect and teach people about the mill's heritage and that of the village. A wide range of local people and visitors to the mill attended the workshops, and were encouraged to explore the site and local area inspired by the information available.
- Stories from the project were used to inspire The Tinderbox Theatre Company and Peak Ballet to develop processional performance pieces. For their commemoration event held on 11 November, the public were invited to follow the performance along a poppy path lined with the banners.
- Community archaeology projects provide opportunities to teach and engage people not usually engaged in the historic environment. Through the development of this strategy we know that young people, and particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to participate in activities relating to heritage in general and archaeology. This reflects the national trend and is why for example Historic England launched their successful 'Kick the Dust' programme (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund).⁷⁹
- Unloved Heritage? Falling in Love with Archaeology⁸⁰ is the name given to a programme of community archaeology activities designed to engage, enthuse and inspire young people throughout Wales to get involved with their local heritage. Each of the projects was developed with partners and young people to make them relevant, and to meet the requirements of the region's archaeology and communities. Using activities ranging from traditional archaeology, recording music, recording buildings, and making public art, creating an app and heritage trail, young people have enthusiastically engaged with the projects.
- One of these projects was run by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT) which focused on the heritage of Dyffryn Nantlle's once lucrative slate quarrying industry. Over the course of the project GAT, along with the community group Dyffryn Nantlle 2020, have worked with local young people whilst they explore, learn and interpret their heritage, making this an intergenerational project.

'East Ilsley itself is steeped in History and Heritage from the old Sheep Sale days and we have a very active local history society as well. It is important that these historical events and facts thrive into the future and help educate the children so they can learn more about the area they live. Anything that promotes this all over West Berkshire is a great thing.'

Response to consultation.

⁷⁹<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/blogs/what-kick-dust>

⁸⁰https://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/InspiringCreativity_THAreport.pdf

Summary of Heritage and the Historic Environment Objectives, Aims and Actions

OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
Protect and promote our unique cultural history, heritage and environment.	Protect and promote cultural assets across West Berkshire – historic buildings and landscapes, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, museum and archaeology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase investment through strategic partnership applications to external funding bodies. For example: The National Lottery Heritage Fund. • Increase volunteering schemes. For example: monitoring of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. • Increase and develop joined up working and partnerships, including with non-arts arts/heritage organisations, to engage a wider demographic, and enhance their understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of West Berkshire’s historic and cultural assets and landscape.



Former Cruise missile shelter complex, Greenham Common airbase. Historic England: Scheduled Monument number 1021040.



Outdoor Theatre at Shaw House, Newbury

Our Vision for Cultural Heritage in West Berkshire 2030

By 2030 we will have a **sustainable, resilient and thriving** cultural heritage sector that **supports creativity and innovation, continuing to make a significant contribution to the economy.**

The cultural heritage sector will have **increased its contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents**, and there will be **improved access to cultural heritage and activities.**

We will have supported an **increase in cultural education learning, training and career progression.**

Our **unique cultural heritage and historic environment will have been protected** and its **significance promoted.**

Cultural Heritage Strategy Themes, Objectives, Aims and Actions to be delivered by 2031

The table below outlines the Cultural Heritage Strategy Themes, Objectives, Aims and Actions to be delivered by 2031. These have been arrived at through a process of consultation with partners and public, with consideration given to West Berkshire Council strategies, relevant national and regional policies and strategies, and in response to external factors such as the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

THEMES	OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
Sustainability	Ensure our cultural and heritage organisations are as sustainable as possible and can thrive.	Provide support and increased economic resilience for organisations, small and medium enterprises (SME's) and individuals in the cultural heritage sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase inward investment through joint initiatives and external funding. • Increase and develop joined up working between organisations and effective strategic partnership working.
Economic Development	Increase domestic and international tourism to generate income, investment and increase economic resilience.	Promote and raise awareness to potential visitors, of the wealth and diversity of culture and heritage. For example: historic buildings and landscapes, events and creative industries in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships and programmes across cultural, heritage, landscape and tourism sectors to create experiential tourism opportunities. • Increase public awareness of the wealth and diversity of cultural and heritage activities, events and places across the district. • Develop partnerships including with Destination Management Organisations, to create and promote experiential tourism opportunities and promote these to tourism providers. • Research and seek financial support from external funders / investors to develop tourism.
Access	To strive to create equality of opportunity for residents to access the district's cultural heritage and activities.	Improve access to the district's cultural heritage and activities through a variety of measures, responding to need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to existing cultural heritage activities. • Create new accessible activities responding to demand.

THEMES	OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Group
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in rural locations with limited/no access to transport. • with restricted mobility (for example, disability) and, or health considerations.
Health and Wellbeing	Contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of all our residents.	Develop the cultural and heritage sector to meet short, medium, and long-term needs of residents, taking a lifespan approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic partnerships. • Develop and deliver effective projects and programmes which meet health and wellbeing priorities as identified in council and health service strategic plans. • Increase access to culture and heritage for our rural and urban communities including children and young people.
Education, Training and Employment	Improve access to cultural education, learning and employment.	Support the education and cultural heritage sector to develop and deliver arts and creative learning opportunities, training, and career progression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote opportunities for apprenticeships and paid internships, through partnerships with local cultural and heritage organisations and businesses.
Heritage and the Historic Environment	Protect and promote our unique cultural history, heritage and environment.	Protect and promote cultural assets across West Berkshire – historic buildings and landscapes, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, museum and archaeology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase investment through strategic partnership applications to external funding bodies. For example: The National Lottery Heritage Fund. • Increase volunteering schemes. For example: monitoring of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. • Increase and develop joined up working and partnerships, including with non-arts arts/heritage organisations, to engage a wider demographic, and enhance their understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of West Berkshire’s historic and cultural assets and landscape.

Actions to Deliver the Vision

Actions will be delivered through the Delivery Plan which will be developed following the ratification of this strategy.

The Delivery Plan, with targets and measures, will accompany this strategy. and be used to track progress, and for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

For reference, the Delivery Plan template is included in the appendices (appendix 2).

Projects/programmes will be selected for inclusion in the Delivery Plan according to a set criteria and 'score sheet'. This allows for the council, partners to take a considered, targeted approach, selecting and prioritising projects/programmes in line with this strategy, and allows for transparency in decision making. It should be noted that over the life of this strategy this method for selection will be reviewed and is subject to change according to changing demands and external factors.

The Delivery Plan Project/Programme Selection Sheet is included in the appendices (appendix 3)



Ace Space music festival hosted by Shaw House, Newbury

Appendices

Appendix: 1

Governance, reporting and communication

The Cultural Heritage Delivery Group

The Cultural Heritage Delivery Group will be tasked with the development of the Delivery Plan. This includes assessing the viability and prioritisation of new projects/programmes, taking into consideration resources required. Setting targets, measures and Key Performance Indicators to assess and maintain progress.

The Cultural Heritage Delivery Group will report to the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board who will have oversight of the work of the Delivery Group and how the strategy contributes to other major strategies in the district.

There will be an annual West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Forum event for community, voluntary, arts, heritage, environment, education, business and tourism organisations to communicate and feedback on progress.

BODY	PURPOSE	PARTNERS / MEMBERS
<p>Manages the delivery of the strategy (objectives and actions).</p> <p>Develops the Delivery Plan to ensure it can deliver on the vision and objectives.</p>	<p>Develops the Delivery/Action Plan.</p> <p>Manages the delivery of the strategy (objectives and actions).</p> <p>Develops the Delivery Plan to ensure it can deliver on the vision and objectives.</p> <p>Listens to / communicates with partners.</p> <p>Reports to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Liaison with national bodies including: Arts Council England, Historic England, Public Health England,</p>	<p>Chair: West Berkshire Council Executive Portfolio Holder: Public Health and Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture.</p> <p>West Berkshire Council elected member / Heritage Champion.</p> <p>1 representative for arts venues/ organisations.</p> <p>1 representative for heritage organisations.</p> <p>1 representative for the economy/ tourism.</p> <p>1 representative for community organisations.</p> <p>1 representative Town Councils.</p> <p>1 representative Parish Councils.</p> <p>The senior West Berkshire Council officer responsible for Culture & Libraries.</p>

Appendix: 2

Supporting Information and Reference Material

Baseline: data and research

Alignment with key council strategies

In developing this strategy we have conducted a review of West Berkshire Council and Public Health strategies to ensure the objectives align with the longer-term and wider strategic view of the challenges facing residents in terms of health, the economy, the environment and demographic change. These are:

- **West Berkshire Vision 2036.**

An exploration into what makes West Berkshire a fantastic place to live, work and learn now and in the future.

- **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2020.**

The framework for joint working with colleagues in the health sector, looking at health inequalities and producing assessments of local need.

- **Economic Development Strategy 2019-2036.**

Considers how the council and its partners might meet the economic challenges likely to emerge in the coming years.

- **Local Transport Plan 2011-2026.**

The framework for the delivery of all aspects of transport and travel for West Berkshire.

- **Core Strategy Development Plan 2006-2026.**

Sets out a long-term vision for West Berkshire to 2026 and translates this into spatial terms, setting out proposals for where development will go, and how this development will be built. The Core Strategy aims to make the different settlements within West Berkshire even more attractive places within which to live, work and enjoy leisure time.

- **Environment Strategy 2019-2023.**

Sets the Councils ambition and vision towards our response to the Climate Emergency.

- **The Natural Environment in Berkshire Biodiversity Strategy 2014-2020.**

Sets out objectives to enhance across habitats and ecosystems on land, species, people and some more general targets.

- **Leisure Strategy 2021 -2031.**

The following is a summary of objectives in these key strategies which are considered of particular relevance to this strategy:

- To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities
- A West Berkshire with beautiful and diverse natural landscapes and a strong cultural offering
- To ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and where possible, enhanced
- To improve accessibility to community infrastructure / promote and maximise opportunities for sustainable travel
- To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs
- To support the protection of the natural environment and reduce carbon emissions

Appendix: 3

External Reports, Research Papers, Plans, and Strategies

Source	Document
NHS	10 Year Long Term Plan
Arts Council England	<p>Arts and Older People Survey, 2015</p> <p>Cultural Activities, Artform and Wellbeing, 2015 The Value of Arts & Culture to People and Society</p> <p>Evidence review of the economic contribution of Libraries Cultural and Creative Spill overs</p> <p>The Economic Impact of Museums in England, 2018</p> <p>Active Lives Survey, Mid November 2015- Mid May 2017</p> <p>Funding data: All organisations in receipt of funding from Arts Council England, and sums received (available per financial year)</p> <p>Education Data Portal</p> <p>Rural Evidence and Data Review 2019</p> <p>The Value of Arts and Culture to People and Society</p> <p>Arts Council England Lets Create Strategy 2020- 2030</p> <p>Case: The Culture and Sport Evidence Programme- A review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport 2015</p> <p>Research to understand the resilience, and challenges to this, of Local Authority Museums, 2015</p> <p>Children and Young People</p>
The National Lottery Heritage Fund	Heritage Volunteering Boosts Wellbeing, 2017
The Heritage Alliance	Inspiring Creativity, 2019
Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)	Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the UK economy, April 2019

What Works - Heritage and Wellbeing	<p>Visual Arts and Mental Health</p> <p>Heritage and Wellbeing</p> <p>Music, Singing and Healthy Adults Music, Singing and Wellbeing</p> <p>The Impact of Historic Places and Assets on Community Wellbeing</p>
Crafts Council	Can Culture do Healthcare
All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing	Inquiry Report- Creative Health: The Arts for Health & Wellbeing, 2017
Department of Health and Social Care	The National Academy of Social Prescribing and Covid-19
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government	National Planning Policy Framework, 2019
Historic England	<p>Heritage Counts: The Value of Heritage, 2014</p> <p>Heritage and Wellbeing, 2014 (Daniel Fujiwara Thomas Cornwall Paul Dolan)</p> <p>Kick the Dust, 2017</p> <p>Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, 2008 Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment, Historic England Advice Note 11, 2018</p>
Hey, G and Hind, J	<i>Solent-Thames Research Framework for the Historic Environment Resource Assessments and Research Agendas</i> . Project Report. Oxford Wessex, 2014
North Wessex Downs AONB	North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024, 2019
West Berkshire Heritage Forum	The West Berkshire Historic Environment Action Plan, 2011



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