

Evolution, Revolution & Innovation

A Cultural Strategy for Shropshire and Telford
& Wrekin

October 2009



Evolution, Revolution & Innovation:
A Cultural Strategy for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

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Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council

Foreword

Culture is something which matters deeply to all of us. It affects the quality of life of everybody and it is the foundation upon which many jobs in the tourism and leisure industries rely.

Those of us who live and work in this wonderful county know that we are fortunate that Shropshire possesses such a fantastic range of cultural assets, from first-class leisure and sporting facilities such as Lilleshall, to superb theatres including The Palace and the new Theatre Severn, along with marvellous countryside and spectacular scenery, not to mention the Birthplace of Industry, the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

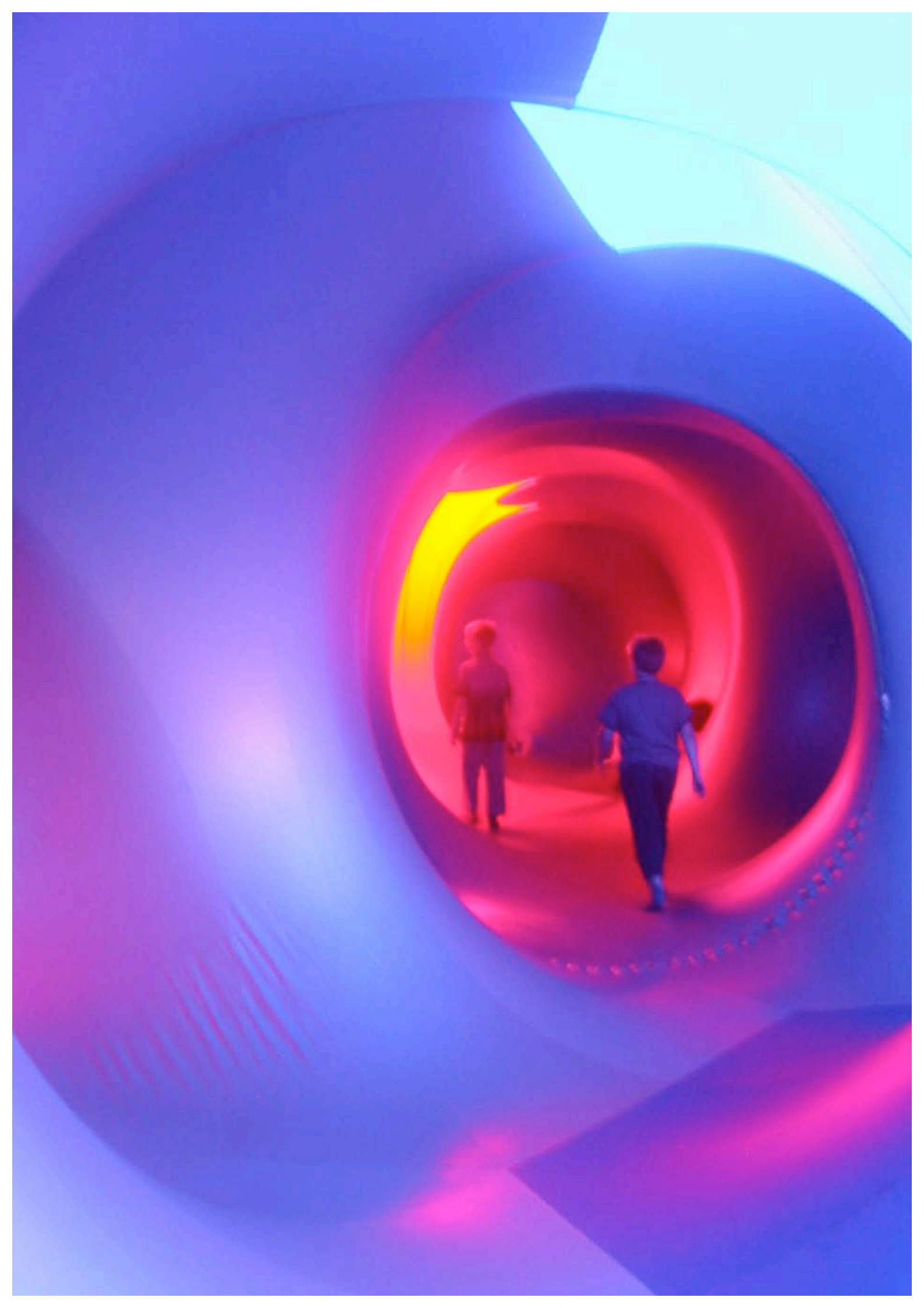
I am, therefore, delighted to recommend to you this new Cultural Strategy for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. It has been developed through a unique collaboration between elected members and council officers of both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council, along with key individuals from the cultural sector. Most of all though, it represents the views of the people of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and their priorities for the county in which they live, work, learn and enjoy their leisure time.

This Cultural Strategy seeks to set out the priorities for cultural development over the years to come and the ways in which culture needs to be firmly embedded in all our planning and development. The Strategy also sets out the ways in which we can release the full potential of culture to drive our economic sustainability and our long-term community well-being, making Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin both a great place to live and a rewarding place to visit.

Steve Miller
Chairman, Cultural Consortium for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

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1 Executive summary

This strategy presents Shropshire Council's and Telford & Wrekin Council's joint vision for culture in the sub-region. It is intentionally a joint strategy designed to celebrate our shared connections and ambitions.

Our vision

We want culture to inspire us all and to shape how we live, learn, work and play.

The strategy celebrates the values that many people have told us they most associate with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin: that it is authentic, independent, real, hand-crafted and green.

What do we mean by culture?

At one level, 'culture', is about places to go and things to do. It includes arts, sports, libraries, reading, museums, heritage, archaeology, archives, architecture, crafts, children's play, parks, open spaces and green networks, countryside recreation, leisure, tourism and the cultural and creative industries.

But culture is also much more than this. It is also about:

- Our sense of identity – as individuals and as a society – the connections we feel with where we live and the people we live among
- Our spiritual, intellectual and emotional characteristics
- Our traditions, beliefs and values

In short, it is about what makes us distinctive and how we choose to express this at community or individual level.

Our aims

Our aim is for culture to enrich the life of every resident in and visitor to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin by helping us:

- Celebrate who we are and where we live
- Connect with other people and places
- Be healthy
- Learn creatively

- Work better
- Have fun

Why have a Cultural Strategy?

The simple answer is because we believe culture is good for us as individuals and beneficial to the communities we live in. We know that culture makes a real difference to people's lives. It can thrill and inspire people. It makes us feel we belong, gives us a sense of who we are, where we've come from and what we want to be. Culture is a catalyst. It can make us healthier – mentally and physically. Culture helps us learn: for fun, for our education and for our work, in new and creative ways. Culture broadens our horizons. It connects us to other people: locally, regionally, nationally and internationally and helps us celebrate those connections. And culture is very good for us economically, creating jobs, attracting tourists and helping us create vibrant and engaging places to live, work and play. A Cultural Strategy will help us to ensure that we coordinate our efforts and achieve the best possible results for the good of everyone in Shropshire.

Whose Strategy is it?

The Strategy will not only serve the local authorities. It embraces a partnership approach between Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council and the private and voluntary sectors. The Strategy has been developed by the new sub-regional Cultural Consortium whose members represent culture, regeneration, health, equality and diversity, safer communities and young people. The Consortium has been set-up to promote the cultural industries and tourism, regionally and nationally and to create opportunities for economic growth in this sector.¹ The strategy will enable the cultural sectors of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin to make strategic connections with regional strategies including the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy, West Midlands Economic Strategy and with national Non-Departmental Public Bodies such as Arts Council England, Sport England and Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

What we want to achieve

The model on the following page summarises the Cultural Strategy.

We have seven key objectives. We want to:

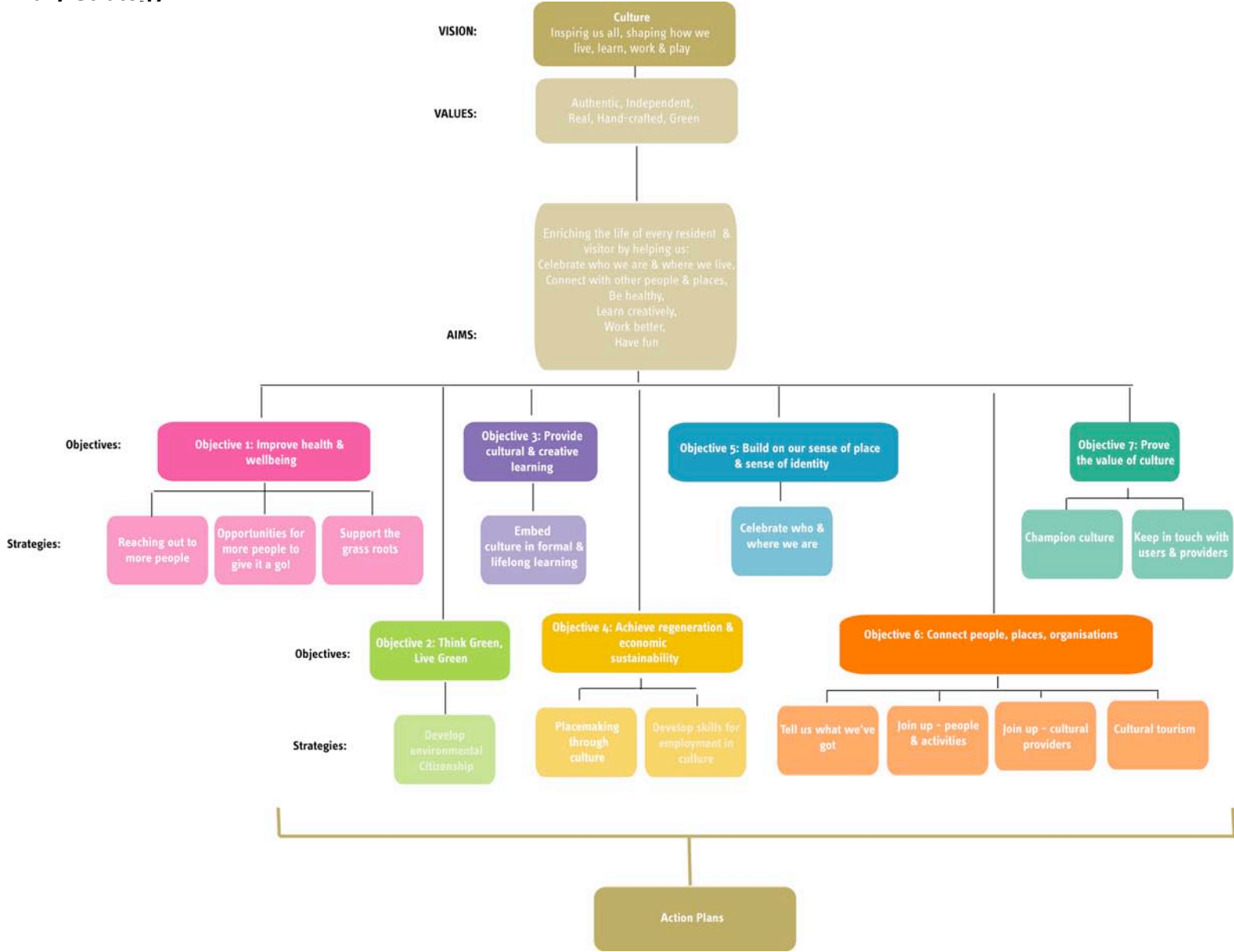
1. Improve health and wellbeing
2. Think Green and Live Green

¹ A list of Cultural Consortium members is appended.

3. Provide cultural and creative learning
4. Achieve regeneration and economic sustainability
5. Build on our sense of place and sense of identity
6. Connect people, places and organisations
7. Prove the value of culture.

We plan to achieve these objectives through the individual strategies identified for each objective.

Summary Strategy





2 About this strategy

This document presents a vision and strategy for culture across the sub-region of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

The strategy has been developed by the new sub-regional Cultural Consortium whose members represent culture, regeneration, health, equality and diversity, safer communities and young people. The consortium has been set-up to promote the region's cultural industries and tourism, regionally and nationally and to create opportunities for economic growth in this sector.² This means that strategy will not only serve the local authorities. It embraces a partnership approach between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin councils and the private and voluntary sectors.

Why now?

This strategy has been developed now because:

- Shropshire Council became a unitary authority on 1st April 2009, alongside the current unitary authority of Telford & Wrekin. Shropshire Council has brought together the six authorities of Shropshire County Council, Shrewsbury & Atcham, North Shropshire, Oswestry, Bridgnorth and South Shropshire.
- There is increasingly closer partnership working across this sub-region.
- There is increasing evidence of the value of culture's contribution to overall quality of life and the part it can play in other linked policies and strategies including education, regeneration and health.
- The current Cultural Strategies for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are either at or near their end.

What does this strategy do?

The Cultural Strategy:

- Presents a shared vision and strategy for culture across the sub-region of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

² A list of Cultural Consortium members is appended.

- Highlights the key cultural assets in the sub-region and levels of engagement
- Provides evidence of the contribution that culture makes towards the economic, social and environmental well-being of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin communities
- Suggests ways to build and strengthen cultural provision and activities
- Encourages cooperation, collaboration and partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors in the provision of culture
- Paints a picture that wider regional and national agencies can understand in order for them to support culture in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin
- Provides a plan for engaging more people, more often and more deeply in culture.

How it was developed

A significant amount of research and consultation throughout 2009 has informed the development of this plan. This included:

- Reviewing the socio-demographic, cultural, environmental, economic and cultural profile of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin; the strategic context in which the two local authorities operate; current levels and profile of participation and non-participation and wider social trends.
- Workshops and interviews with representatives from a range of cultural and partner organisations to develop the vision and plan
- Consultation with young people from the sub-regions, who attended workshops
- A survey of the public's participation in, response to, needs from and desires for culture to which over 360 people responded
- A review of the economic impact of culture in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

Reading this document

This document presents:

- The background to and context for the strategy

- The distinctive identity and profile of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin which informs the strategy
- A summary of the cultural assets which exist and current levels of engagement in cultural activities
- The benefits of culture to individuals and society
- The vision and objectives which the strategy is working to
- The broad strategies through which the vision and objectives will be achieved
- How the success of the strategy will be measured.

A pictorial summary of the strategy is presented on page 7.

Related documents

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Cultural Atlas

This is a comprehensive review of the socio-demographic, environmental, economic and cultural profile of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin; the strategic context in which the two local authorities operate; current levels and profile of participation and non-participation and wider social trends.



Tonight's Program

SBC 2

ITV 1

Jack searches for a wife and adds to a family of five, 8.30pm

12.30 ITV Lunchtime News (7) (30)

1.30 ITV Sunday with Peter and Paul (7) (30)

2.30 Make Me Perfect (7) (30)

3.30 Countdown with Colin and Gemma (7) (30)

4.15 Deal or No Deal (7) (30)

5.00 Richard & Judy with guests (7) (30)

6.00 The Simpsons (7) (30)

6.30 Hollyoaks (7) (30)

7.00 Channel 4 News (7) (30)

7.30 30 Minutes (7) (30)

8.00 ...

12.55 ER (7) (30)

1.00 The Big Bang Theory (7) (30)

1.30 The Bill (7) (30)

2.00 The Bill (7) (30)

2.30 The Bill (7) (30)

3.00 The Bill (7) (30)

3.30 The Bill (7) (30)

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3

Who we are: past, present and future

The Cultural Strategy acknowledges and celebrates the distinctive identity of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. It reflects the profile, needs and aspirations of local people. It looks to the future, taking into consideration emerging cultural, social and leisure trends.

3.1 What makes Shropshire, 'Shropshire'?

Identity

People living in Shropshire tell us that what they appreciate is its distinctive greenness, tranquillity, authenticity and independence. They feel a deep sense of ownership of its natural landscape, diverse geology and biodiversity. They feel that the more relaxed way of life in Shropshire is in tune with the landscape's natural rhythms, tranquillity and greenery. They are conscious of its rich history as the borderland between England and Wales and its contribution to the Industrial Revolution. They enjoy its market towns with independent retailers selling locally-made and handcrafted goods. They benefit from a rich sporting heritage with world-class facilities such as SpArC, the proudly supported local football team of Shrewsbury Town and a rich amateur-level range of sports clubs. They enjoy all this being celebrated through the diverse range of cultural activity on offer.

Location

Shropshire is England's largest inland county. Surrounded by six other counties, Shropshire shares its borders and identity with Wales to the West; Herefordshire and Worcestershire to the South; Cheshire to the North and Staffordshire and the Black Country with its urban conurbations of Wolverhampton and Birmingham a short distance to the East. There is access to a fast, national road network via the M54 and good train access due to Shrewsbury being a rail network hub but access within rural areas is significantly more limited.

Natural environment

More than a fifth of the Shropshire landscape is within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Shropshire has some of the most diverse geology in the world and significant natural assets such as the Shropshire Hills, the North Shropshire Meres and Mosses, the Ellesmere Glacial Lakes, and the River Severn Valley. Such assets

are acknowledged as the county's greatest asset³ and Shropshire has recently been recognised as a significant remaining area of tranquillity by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England⁴.

Population

Shropshire is rural and sparsely populated. From a total population of 290,900, just under a quarter live in Shrewsbury. 63% of the population live in urban areas and 36% live in rural villages and hamlets, and dispersed dwellings in the wider countryside. Shrewsbury is a named Growth Point that will see substantial increases in housing and jobs over the next 15 years. The other main market towns of Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Market Drayton, Ludlow and Whitchurch are much smaller than Shrewsbury and together contain about 20% of the total population⁵. The sub-region has a population density of or 235 persons per square mile⁶. This compares to the national figures of 1,015 persons per square mile.

The population is increasing. It is expected to grow by a further 16% by 2031. In 2001, the Black and Minority Ethnic population of Shropshire was 1.2% of the total population. This is significantly below the national figure of 9% and regional figure of 11%⁷. The vast majority (89%) of Shropshire residents were born in England⁸.

Shropshire has an ageing population; the number of people aged 45 to retirement age increased by 25% from 1991 – 2007⁹. Much of the population growth is estimated to be people aged 60 and over¹⁰. In contrast, the number of people aged 16 – 29 has fallen by 18%. In 2005, children made up 18.4% of the population of Shropshire¹¹ compared to 19.3% nationally¹².

In 2008 Shropshire had just over 19,000 residents aged 18 – 64 with a moderate or serious physical disability. This figure represents 0.6% of the total disabled population in England. It is predicted that there will be a 3.9% increase in the numbers of disabled people in

³ Shropshire Core Strategy: Policy Directions, Shropshire Council (2009: 10) [http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning.nsf/viewAttachments/EWET-7UVHQ6/\\$file/core-strategy-policy-directions.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning.nsf/viewAttachments/EWET-7UVHQ6/$file/core-strategy-policy-directions.pdf)

⁴ 'Countryside Access Strategy for Shropshire 2008 – 2018', Shropshire County Council (2008: 12)

⁵ 'Shropshire Core Strategy: Issues and Options; www.shropshire.gov.uk

⁶ 'Population and Migration – mid year population estimates', Shropshire Council: <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/factsfigures.nsf/open/56DF4B7295A052EA80256CB700507117>

⁷ 'Shropshire Profile 2007', Shropshire Sustainability Group, Shropshire County Council (2007: 25)

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ 'Shropshire Profile 2007', Shropshire Sustainability Group, Shropshire County Council (2007: 25)

¹⁰ 'State of the Countryside – 2008 report', Rural Communities Commission (2008: 19)

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² 'Key Population and Vital Statistics', Office for National Statistics (2005: 93)

Shropshire by 2025, a lower increase than that predicted nationally (9.4%)¹³.

Health

Health is generally good with longer than the national life-expectancy and above average numbers of people adopting healthy lifestyles¹⁴, although obesity levels are around 2% above national average¹⁵.

Education

Shropshire Council maintains 157 schools attended by over 38,000 3 – 18 year olds¹⁶. Educational attainment is high, with 68% of pupils gaining 5 or more GCSE's at A*-C in 2007/2008, compared to 64.1% regionally¹⁷.

In terms of Adult and Community Learning, there are 3,289 learners for the academic year 2008/09 attending courses across the county at various community and school based locations. Courses range from tasters to short and longer courses and include 'Family Learning', courses which are designed to help families improve their skills so that they are more confident in supporting their children's learning and 'Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities' (NLDC), bespoke learning arrangements to help learners in deprived areas re-engage with learning and improve their skills. In addition, many learners are engaged in more informal courses via, for example, U3A groups and volunteer groups.

Deprivation

While Shropshire is relatively prosperous overall, there are pockets of rural deprivation, particularly in the North¹⁸. Average gross weekly earnings, at £400 per week are significantly lower than the West Midlands average of £430 or the England average of £462¹⁹. Crime levels are significantly lower than the regional average With 30 crimes reported per 1000 population compared to 45 regionally²⁰. In addition, rural isolation poses deprivation issues, not least in terms of provision of sports facilities and access to arts and cultural opportunities, for all age groups.

¹³ Statistics obtained from www.pansi.org.uk

¹⁴ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Shropshire', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 27)

¹⁵ *ibid*: 28

¹⁶ www.shropshire.gov.uk/schools.nsf/open/F7C89A7EC4F6441A80256C78004A6634

¹⁷ 'DCSF: GCSE and Equivalent results in England 2007/08

¹⁸ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Shropshire', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 22)

¹⁹ *ibid*: 15

²⁰ 'Crime Barometer', Local Futures (2008)

Economy

The most recent estimate of total Gross Value Added for Shropshire in 2008 is just under £4bn, up from £2.35bn in 1995, an average annual growth of 5.4%, much of which is in the service sector, which accounted for 85% of growth between 1995 and 2004²¹. At the same time, the knowledge economy is declining in terms of overall employment compared to regional and English averages²².

At June 2009, the unemployment rate in Shropshire was 2.9%, compared to 5.4% for the West Midlands overall. Over the previous 12 months, unemployment rose by 108% compared to 79% for the West Midlands.²³

Tourism

Shropshire's tourism offer centres on its natural and historic environment. In 2005, 10.6m visits were made to Shropshire of which 9.3m (88%) were day visits and 1.3m involved an overnight stay²⁴. 44% of day visits were to towns and 56% to the countryside. The total value of tourism was estimated to be £561m in 2005.

3.2 What makes Telford and Wrekin, 'Telford & Wrekin'?

Identity

Telford & Wrekin, by contrast, is thought of as younger, owing to the creation of Telford as a new town in 1968. However, the borough also includes several small market towns that pre-existed the designation of the new town: Wellington, Dawley, Donnington, Madeley, Oakengates, Ironbridge and Newport²⁵. Telford & Wrekin also has a strong sense of industrial heritage from Ironbridge Gorge and its designation in 1986 as a World Heritage Site.

Telford & Wrekin offers urban living in a green environment with a significant rural hinterland. People enjoy the more urban shopping and leisure experiences afforded by Telford, but also appreciate its greenery, which includes a network of hedgerows, canals, meadows and other open spaces including the 170 acre Telford Town Park. These create a wild landscape unheard of in new town development and which achieved international recognition and pioneered the way

²¹ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Shropshire', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 6)

²² *ibid*: 12

²³ Employment and Labour Market, June 2009 at www.shropshire.gov.uk/shropshire/factsfigures.nsf

²⁴ 'Tourism Facts' Shropshire Tourism: http://www.stmem.com/tourism_facts.htm

²⁵ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Telford & Wrekin', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 5)

forward for other new towns.²⁶ The people of Telford & Wrekin also benefit from world-class sporting facilities such as Lilleshall National Sports Centre, the proudly supported local football team AFC Telford United and leisure opportunities such as The Bicycle Hub and Telford Ice Rink.

Location

Telford & Wrekin neighbours Shropshire to the West and the Black Country to the East. Wolverhampton is within 25 minutes drive and Birmingham within 40 minutes. This location means that Telford & Wrekin is seen as a 'green gateway' to Shropshire. While Telford has a good transport network through its proximity to the M54, levels of congestions are a concern for future economic development²⁷.

Natural environment

While 84% of the 167,000 population live in Telford itself, 72% of the land area of Telford & Wrekin is made up of rural areas. Telford itself is also significantly 'green', with 40% of the town's land area comprising green and open spaces.

Population

Telford & Wrekin's population of 167,000 is predicted to rise by a further 24% by 2026. Telford is a named Growth Point that will see significant growth in jobs and housing over the next 15 years. Telford's population is younger than the regional average with 32.9% of the population aged under 25²⁸. Although, as with national trends, the population is ageing, with 45% of the population estimated to be over 65 by 2026²⁹. The Black and Minority ethnic population, at 5.2% is lower than the regional average of 11.3%, but higher than Shropshire's 1.2%³⁰.

Telford & Wrekin council support over 2,700 disabled service users, most of whom are over 75 years old³¹, however includes nearly 650 users living independently aged 18 – 64 and just under 550 aged 65 – 75.

²⁶ www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

²⁷ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Telford & Wrekin', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 5)

²⁸ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Telford & Wrekin', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 27)

²⁹ *ibid*: 28

³⁰ 'Telford & Wrekin Key Facts and Figures', Telford & Wrekin Council: (2008)

³¹ 1,530 service users are aged 75 or over, this figure includes frailty and temporary illnesses for which they use services, not just those registered disabled

Health

Health is generally good, with longer than the national average life-expectancy. Obesity levels are high, with 18.7% of residents obese compared to 15.8% regionally. Smoking levels are also high, with 26.1% of the population smoking, compared to 21.9% regionally³².

Education

Educational attainment is lower than the regional average. 60.3% of pupils gained 5 or more GCSEs A*-C in 2007-2008, compared to 64.1% regionally, although this result represents an increase from the result in 2006/07 when 55.2% of Telford & Wrekin pupils gained 5 or more GCSEs A* - C³³.

Telford & Wrekin council maintain 57 primary schools, 13 secondary schools, 4 special schools and 26 nursery schools and classes across the sub-region.

In terms of adult and lifelong learning, provision can be accessed across the sub-region via Telford & Wrekin Council's Life Long Learning and Family Learning services, the Workers Education Association, New College and TCAT. A total of 2,405 learners are on courses provided by Telford & Wrekin Council across these institutions and services in 2008/09. TCAT facilitates the most learners at 1,204, followed by Telford & Wrekin Council's services at 1,055. In addition 2,906 learners are on non local-authority funded courses at TCAT.

Deprivation

The borough has some significant pockets of deprivation. Ranked the 113th (out of 354) most deprived Local Authority area in England, the borough also has 6 areas that are in the top 10% most deprived nationally³⁴. Overall crime levels have fallen by 22.4% between 2004/05 and 2007/08 and Telford & Wrekin has fewer notifiable offences per 100 people (8.4) compared to the region as a whole (9.5)³⁵. During this time violent crime rates, domestic burglaries and vehicle crimes have all fallen, in contrast the rate of racially aggravated crime has risen by 200%³⁶.

³² 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Telford & Wrekin', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 32)

³³ 'DCSF: GCSE and Equivalent results in England 2007/08

³⁴ 'Telford & Wrekin Key Facts and Figures', Telford & Wrekin Council: (2008)

³⁵ 'West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Telford & Wrekin', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 33)

³⁶ *ibid*

Economy

Economically, Telford & Wrekin experienced an average annual growth rate of 4.6% between 1995 and 2005³⁷. Although more recent data suggests unemployment rose by 28.5% between 2007 and 2008, overall unemployment, at 5.7% is still lower than the national average of 5.9%³⁸. Average gross weekly earnings, at £433, are slightly above the regional average of £430, but lower than England overall at £462³⁹. The registered number of businesses grew at a rate of 2.5% per year between 1994 and 2007, compared to 1.4% regionally. The knowledge economy is a particular area of growth⁴⁰.

Tourism

Telford & Wrekin attracted 1.6m visitors in 2005. The majority – around 80% are on day visits, but a significant amount (20%) stay overnight. Of those who stay overnight, 46% are on holiday, 27% visiting friends and relatives and 26% on business. The Telford International Convention Centre, as one of the UK's top 10 event venues, attracts over half a million business visitors each year alone⁴¹. Similarly, the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site attracts between 750,000 and 1 million leisure visitors each year. The total value of tourism in Telford & Wrekin was estimated to be £104m in 2005.

3.3 The changing context

Society doesn't stand still. Research that looks at social and leisure trends to see what the future might be like, identifies the following trends:

- In an economic downturn people stay closer to home for their leisure activities and spend less
- Value-for-time is also important so when people are willing to pay, demand for full day-out activities increases
- Tourists take holidays at home rather than abroad and some forgo holidays in favour of multiple days-out from home
- The UK short-breaks market is steadily growing

³⁷ *ibid*: 31

³⁸ 'Telford & Wrekin Key Facts and Figures', Telford & Wrekin Council: (2008)

³⁹ West Midlands Regional Economic Assessment Telford & Wrekin', West Midlands Regional Observatory (2008: 15)

⁴⁰ 'Telford & Wrekin – key facts and figures', Sustainability Group (2008)

⁴¹ 'Sub-Priority 3: Promoting the Area as a Business and Tourism Destination', Telford & Wrekin Council

- Leisure that is related to wellbeing is rising as people become increasingly keen to look after their physical fitness and mental health
- Desire for self-improvement through learning as illustrated by increased take-up of life-coaching, evening classes, learning holidays and book clubs
- There are more older people and more who want to stay fit, active and involved in society and Central Government now has a specific strategy, 'Building a Society for all Ages' (2009) addressing the ageing population and how Government and non-governmental organisations can work together to help older people live longer, healthier and more active lives⁴²
- People are increasingly seeking to live in rural or semi-rural environments due to a perception of a more tranquil and authentic way of life
- Workers increasingly desire flexible working patterns and work-life balance in order to have more personal and family time
- A stronger green conscience is emerging as people become more aware of the impact of climate change and the need to protect the environment
- There is a stronger desire for authenticity with people being more concerned about the provenance of goods, buying local and fairtrade
- Changing media technologies from the radio and television broadcast model which communicates from one person to many, to the more decentralised and self-controlled technology offered by digital technology and the internet.
- Rise of rights: increasingly cultural experience is seen as an individual's right rather than a privilege and this has led to a strong focus on equality of access and encouraging participation.
- The London 2012 Games offers Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and unparalleled opportunity to use culture to support our economy and to grow participation, especially given that the village of Much Wenlock is widely recognised as the birthplace of the Olympian Games and inspiration behind the modern Olympic movement.

⁴² 'Building a Society for all ages', HM Government (2009)



4 Cultural assets and involvement

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin both have extensive cultural provision and above average engagement in many cultural activities.

4.1 Provision and participation

Libraries and archives

Use of libraries is increasing in both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Around half of all adults visit libraries and while Shropshire has slightly above regional average use, Telford has slightly less, but is successfully attracting priority groups.

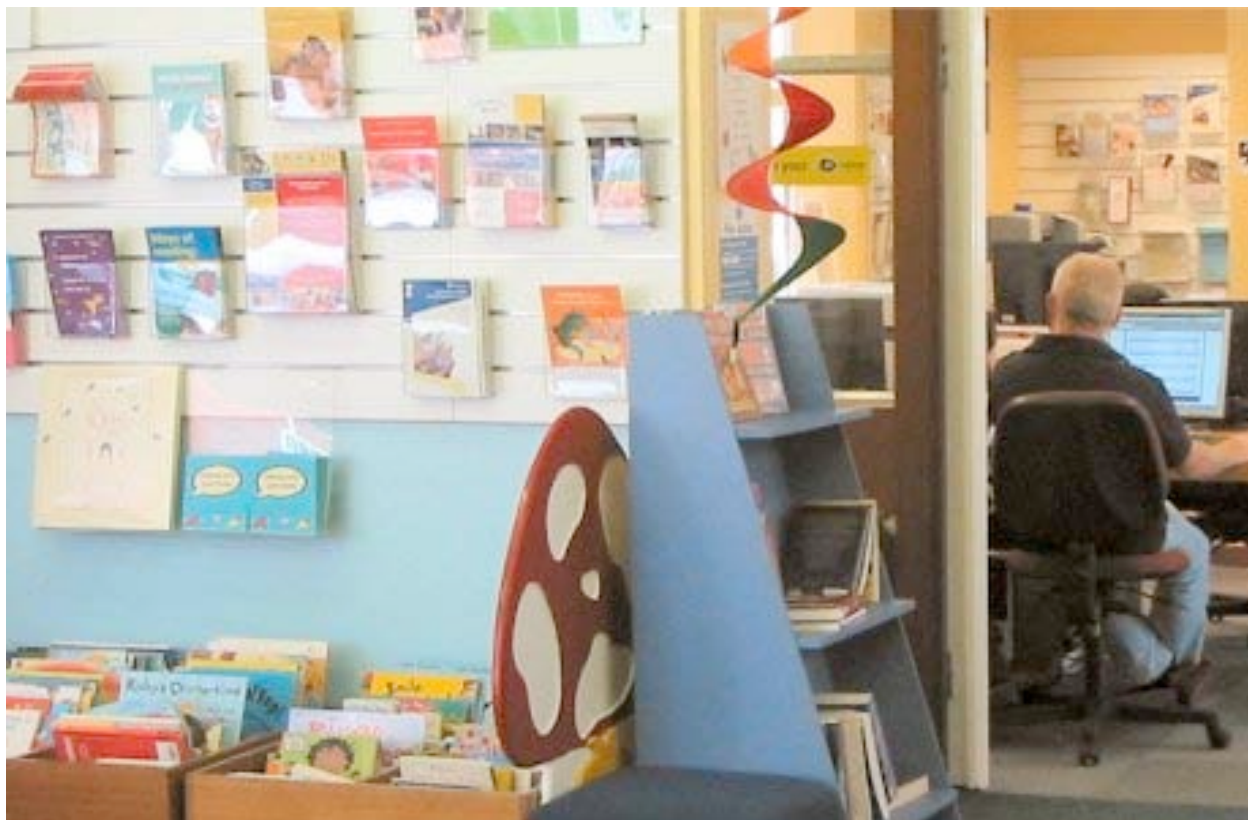
Around 5% of the population use archives and there is significantly increasing interest in both family and local history.

The sub-regions have benefited from increased joint-agency work across initiatives such as the National Year of Reading 2008 and events such as Shrewsbury's Children's BookFest and the North Shropshire Book Festival which included storytelling walks, author visits to schools and projects in which young people chose book stock for libraries at Centre North East, Centre North West and Market Drayton Youth Centre. This year Telford has promoted increased participation among children and young people via its new Telford Book Award which is part of Telford Culture Zone.

Museums and heritage

Museums and heritage assets are strong in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. Ironbridge Gorge is one of only 28 World Heritage sites in the UK, attracting close to a million visits a year. The Ironbridge Gorge Museums attract around half a million visits a year, and latest figures suggest that the number of visitors is increasing steadily. In 2009 the Pontcysllte Canal, built by Thomas Telford and situated in the north west of Shropshire spanning across into north-east Wales, was also awarded World Heritage status. Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, is attracting increasing numbers of visitors with over 40,000 recorded so far this year⁴³, and recently achieved national profile in the BBC's Victorian Farm series. The independent Royal Air Force Museum at Cosford attracts a further 313,000 visits a year. The proportion of people in Shropshire who visit museums is, at 53.8%, higher than regional average of 49%, while in Telford & Wrekin it is lower, at 46.1%.

⁴³ The figure of 40,000 represents the number of visitors across 25 weeks of a 30-week season for 2009/10. The number of visitors has increased significantly from the 28,000 recorded in 2007/08.



English Heritage manages 16 properties across the sub-region including Wroxeter Roman City which was recently commended for its high quality of educational services and facilities, achieving a Sandford Award⁴⁴. The National Trust manage a further 10 sites including Carding Mill Valley, attracting 250,000 visits a year⁴⁵ and Attingham Park with 217,000 visits.⁴⁶ While nationally around 70% of adults attend at least one type of historic environment site in any year, the figure for the West Midlands is lower at 66%. People from rural areas are more likely to visit (77%) than those living in urban areas (68%). In the West Midlands, a lower proportion of people from priority groups visit historic environment sites than nationally.⁴⁷ A key barrier to visiting these sites is lack of vehicle access.⁴⁸

In addition to the above there are a number of small volunteer-led museums and heritage attractions throughout the sub-regions such as Bishop's Castle Heritage Centre and the Llanymynech Heritage Area.

Arts

Shropshire, has a significantly higher proportion of people (46.3%), attending or participating in arts more than three times in the past 12 months, than the regional average of 41%, while the proportion in Telford is slightly lower, at 37.4%⁴⁹. Shropshire has prioritised engagement in the arts, adopting NI11 as one of its indicators with an improvement target of 3% by 2010/11. Interestingly, adults in rural areas are significantly more likely to attend arts events (73% compared to 65%) and participate in arts activities (58% compared to 52%) than those in urban areas.⁵⁰

Strong performing arts venues exist in the new Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Oakengates Theatre at The Place and Telford College of Arts and Technology.

Shropshire has strong festivals and events provision, which both engage large numbers of people and attract inward investment. These include Shrewsbury Summer Season, The Shrewsbury Folk Festival, The Festival at the Edge, the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Festival and the Clun Green Man Festival. The Severn Project led by Shropshire Council builds on the strength of the festivals and events sector and brings together a partnership of Local Authorities along the River Severn, delivering 9 days of activities and

⁴⁴ 'English Heritage annual report 2008/09' (2009: 3)

⁴⁵ <http://www.cardingmillvalley.org.uk/?page=41>

⁴⁶ http://www.alva.org.uk/visitor_statistics/. Figures for 2008

⁴⁷ Taking Part, 2005-2006

⁴⁸ Attending heritage sites: A Report for English Heritage, CEBR, 2007

⁴⁹ Results taken from "Informing Change" Arts Council England (2007: 16, 72)

⁵⁰ 'Taking Part: England's survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport annual data 2006/07', DCMS, (2008: 6)

reaching 27,000 people. Festivals and events are also one of the growth priorities in the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy⁵¹.

Both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have a variety of initiatives aimed at encouraging people who don't currently participate in the arts to become involved. Examples include The Project Group, an organisation working with individuals in touch with mental health services; Qube a centre and exhibition space in Oswestry, working with members of the community marginalised through age, health, disability or rural isolation; and DASH (Disability arts in Shropshire) - a disability arts user-led organisation. Arty Party in Telford & Wrekin, has attracted a further £250,000 of 3 year funding for its successful provision of creative activities for adults and children with learning disabilities. Oakengates Theatre at The Place is working with Sure Start to break down barriers to participation in the arts for families.

Sport

Sport is a strength in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, illustrated by the success of the Energize County Sports Partnership and the range of initiatives designed to increase engagement in sport. 23% of adults regularly participate in Shropshire and 17% in Telford & Wrekin compared to 19.1% in the West Midlands region. Volunteering in sport is particularly strong, with 6.2% volunteering in Shropshire and 4.7% in Telford & Wrekin, compared to 4.7% regionally.⁵² Telford & Wrekin Council has prioritised adult participation in sport, adopting the National Indicator NI8 (adult participation in sport and active recreation) as one of its Local Authority Agreement indicators with an improvement target of 24% by 2010/11. Child obesity is also a priority with the Council also adopting NI56, aiming to reduce the proportion of obese year 6 school pupils to 17.7% by 2010/11. Participation has significantly increased for school pupils, with 91% of pupils in Telford & Wrekin participating in 2 hours or more of sport a week and 89% in Shropshire, compared to 85% nationally.

The sub-region has strong community sport and physical activity provision through a network of over 450 clubs and organisations. It also has some outstanding facilities, for example Lilleshall National Sports Centre, Shrewsbury Town Football Club's Prostar Stadium and the Welti Tennis and Leisure Centre. These facilities enable top class sporting events to take place within Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, for example England vs. Norway women's football international.

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have strong historic links to the modern Olympics through the legacy of William Penny Brookes of Much Wenlock, and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic

⁵¹ West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy', Advantage West Midlands (2008: 28)

⁵² Figures taken from Active People survey 2007 – 08. Regular participation means at least 3 weekly sessions of moderate exercise per week; volunteering as at least 1 hour's sports volunteering per week

Games will generate a lot of interest and therefore opportunities for the area. Four venues have been selected as 2012 training grounds creating key opportunities to inspire further participation through links with the London 2012 Olympics.

Countryside Recreation

Shropshire provides extensive access to the countryside for recreation, offering 3,400 miles of rights of way; 10,000 hectares of open access land; significant long distance walking trails, bridleways and cycle routes. 34 nature reserves and 150 parks, play areas, recreation grounds and country parks managed by Shropshire Council alone. Telford & Wrekin, while more urban than Shropshire, is still significantly 'green' with 900 individual rights of way totalling over 360 kilometres of path,⁵³ and four district parks including the significant Telford Town Park, which in itself attracts over 1 million visitors a year. In Telford itself, green and open space accounts for 40% of land area⁵⁴.

According to the Rambler's Association, walking is by far the most popular form of physical activity in Britain with 77% of UK adults claiming to walk for pleasure about once a month.⁵⁵ Shropshire Tourism identifies that 2.9 million visitors per year carry out some walking activity while in Shropshire⁵⁶ and there is a definite demand for enhanced access between the natural environment and urban areas⁵⁷. Natural England suggests that much use of countryside and rights of way access land is for 'gentle' purposes such as ambling, dog-walking and enjoying the scenery, with only 17% being for serious walking.⁵⁸ Shropshire Council research suggests that after walking for recreation, cycling and horse riding are the most popular countryside pursuits⁵⁹. Barriers to more people enjoying the countryside include transport access, stiles, not enough information on the routes and overgrown paths⁶⁰

⁵³ 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Study', Telford & Wrekin Council (2007: 19)

⁵⁴ 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Study', Telford & Wrekin Council (2007: 3)

⁵⁵ 'Walking is Britain's most popular outdoor recreation' Ramblers Association: <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/info/factsandfigures/recreation.htm>

⁵⁶ 'Countryside Access Strategy for Shropshire 2008 – 2010', Shropshire County Council (2008: 58)

⁵⁷ Shropshire Core Strategy: Policy Directions, Shropshire Council (2009: 10) [http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning.nsf/viewAttachments/EWET-7UVHQ6/\\$file/core-strategy-policy-directions.pdf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning.nsf/viewAttachments/EWET-7UVHQ6/$file/core-strategy-policy-directions.pdf)

⁵⁸ 'Natural England Open Access Annual Monitoring Report 2007', Natural England (2008: 9)

⁵⁹ Over 90% of responses to 2005 survey selected walking for recreation followed by 12% for cycling and 10% for horse riding: Countryside Access Strategy for Shropshire 2008 – 2010', Shropshire County Council (2008: 20)

⁶⁰ 'Countryside Access Strategy for Shropshire 2008 – 2010', Shropshire County Council (2008: 19)

Youth and play provision

Provision of youth services and play areas is an important issue. Young people in Shropshire have themselves identified that there is 'not enough things to do for young people like regular music nights or venues for young bands'⁶¹. Consultation conducted by Play England in 2008 found that parks and green spaces are very important to children and young people – these are where the great majority of children say they play and want to play.⁶² This is true for some older children and young people locally who want opportunities to socialise in safe open environments without being pushed towards structured youth provision⁶³.

In Shropshire, children and young people have been involved in identifying their needs, and making decisions themselves about spending on provision, e.g. on play and parks / open spaces (Bridgnorth) and corporate spending on swimming centres and transport facilities (North Shropshire), through mechanisms including the interactive Youth Summit arranged by and held with young people in North Shropshire in 2007⁶⁴.

Community sport and physical activity clubs are an important part of youth services provision. Volunteering in sport, in particular to support youth sport, is the largest volunteering activity in the country. In July 2007 the Government announced a new sporting initiative for young people commonly referred to as the 'five hour offer'. This included funding for up to five hours of sport per week for all children and young people, including two hours within the curriculum, and three hours for young people aged 16-19.

Community sports clubs play a vital role in reaching this target and generally children in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have access to a good network of high quality sports clubs. As self-assessment exercise coordinated by Energize Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, the County Sports Partnership, in June 2009 showed that children and young people had access to between 2.9 and 4.1 hours of sport and community clubs a week, the highest being in South Shropshire.

Tourism

While approximately 12.2m tourists visit Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin each year, the majority of these (87%) are day visits, with just 13% staying overnight⁶⁵. Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin have different profile of overnight visitors. Of Shropshire's 1.3m overnight

⁶¹ 'So Get This', the Speaking Out Group (2004: 14)

⁶² '11 Million', Play England (2008: 25)

⁶³ '11 Million', Play England (2008: 25)

⁶⁴ NYA / LGA / DCFS; 'Positive Activities and developed budgets: survey findings; interactive Youth Summit 2007 DVD available through Shropshire Children Services Participation Team or Principle Rural Policy Officer

⁶⁵ 'Telford & Wrekin Tourism Economic Impact Assessment 2005', Heart of England Tourist Board (2007: 13)

visitors, 65% are on holiday, 18% visiting friends and relatives and 16% on business⁶⁶. 91% of overnight tourists come from within the UK, 9% come from overseas. Of Telford & Wrekin's 306,000 overnight visitors, 46% are on holiday, 27% visiting friends and relatives and 26% on business⁶⁷. 89% of overnight tourists come from within the UK, 11% come from overseas.

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games has already prompted national and international interest in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin as a whole, and Much Wenlock in particular. The area has featured on a number of television programmes around the world, and this visibility will only increase in the run up to the Games, with a resultant increase in visitor numbers. Consequently Much Wenlock will be a vitally important asset over the coming years.

In terms of business tourism, the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy sees conferences and exhibitions as a major market growth opportunity. Whilst strongly focused on Birmingham, Telford International Centre is identified as a key venue. The strategy also suggests that a competitive edge can be created in this market by adding value through exploitation of strong leisure brands of the region that convey world-class culture.⁶⁸ Ironbridge, as a World Heritage Site is clearly key to this offer as are the links with countryside and heritage attractions throughout Shropshire. The West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy identifies three other growth opportunities that relate to both general and business tourism. Culture and heritage is acknowledged as playing a critical role in the regional economy through contributing to quality of life, place making, the image of the West Midlands region and local pride. Events and festivals are viewed as a key part of delivering an authentic experience and a significant driver in the growth of the short breaks market. There has been a huge growth in events and festivals over the last 10 years; 40% of all visitors to the UK take part in an event or festival during a short break to the UK⁶⁹. In addition, food and drink are viewed as being increasingly significant in the West Midlands' tourism offer, following on from the success of Ludlow becoming a food and drink destination.

Creative Industries and the Cultural Sector

⁶⁶ 'Shropshire Tourism Economic Impact Assessment 2005', Heart of England Tourist Board (2007: 9)

⁶⁷ 'Telford & Wrekin Tourism Economic Impact Assessment 2005', Heart of England Tourist Board (2007: 9)

⁶⁸ 'West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy', Advantage West Midlands (2008: 20)

⁶⁹ 'West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy', Advantage West Midlands (2008: 26)

The cultural sector⁷⁰ is of growing importance in the West Midlands' job market. Between 2003 and 2007, the numbers employed in the creative sector grew from 133k to 160k and in 2007 8.7% of the total West Midlands workforce was employed in the creative sector, a growth of 20.6% from 2003 and significantly higher increase than any other region in England⁷¹.

The total number of employees in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin in the cultural sector has fluctuated between 2003 and 2007 in both regions. After a peak of 15,000 employees, the number in Shropshire has declined to 13,000 in 2006, remaining steady into 2007 and representing 5.3% of the total workforce. Telford & Wrekin also experienced a decline in the total number employed in 2006 but has since seen significant growth with 3.4% of the total workforce (amounting to 8,400 people) employed in the sector in 2007⁷². Shropshire was home to 6.9% of the West Midlands' cultural businesses in 2007 and Telford & Wrekin home to 2.9%.

The sub-region has particular strengths in visual arts, crafts and design and a growing pattern of festivals, all of which have been identified by the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy as key areas for tourism growth, as mentioned above⁷³. The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site in particular has been identified as an area where investment in the creative industries will pay dividends.

For the visual arts sector, actual growth will depend in part on the motivations of the individual creative producers. Research in 2006 suggested that the crafts and visual arts sector had not yet developed the profile or effectiveness to need workspace provision but that there was demand for sector development support in the form of networking, meeting, exhibition, collaboration opportunities and business support spaces.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ The definition of the cultural sector broadly follows the DCMS's definition of culture and encompasses visual art, performance, audio-visual, books and press, heritage, sport and tourism

⁷¹ State of the Region Update Report: Culture Dataset, West Midlands Regional Observatory (2009). These figures are significantly lower than the previous estimates contained in the Regional Cultural Observatory's document 'Growing the Cultural Economy in the West Midlands' (2007). These differences are due to changes in Standard Industrial Classifications going from 4-digit categories to more detailed 5-digit categories. The 5-digit level data has allowed for a much tighter definition of cultural sector activity meaning that the impact of the cultural sector can be isolated more effectively and results will appear significantly lower than 4-digit figures previously published.

⁷² State of the Region Update Report: Culture Dataset, West Midlands Regional Observatory (2009)

⁷³ 'West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy', Advantage West Midlands (2008: 24 – 29)

⁷⁵ 'Creative workspace provision in and for the Rural Regeneration Zone', Advantage West Midlands (2006: 55)

For the sport sector, the drive to increase sports participation, and the quantity and quality of sports facilities, together with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, offer a huge opportunity for the entire West Midlands economy. The combined effects of these drivers will propel the sports industry to over 2% of regional employment.

Who doesn't engage and why?

At the same time there are key groups of people who are *less* likely to attend or participate in cultural activities. Overall, these groups are most likely to include older people, ethnic minority communities including migrant workers, people with a limiting disability, longer-term unemployed people, those in lower socio-economic groups and people in rural areas.

There are many reasons why some people don't participate in culture, including:

- A perception that culture is elitist and 'not for them'
- Limited local provision, particularly in more rural areas
- Transport limitations
- Financial barriers including the cost of transport as well as the cost of participation, particularly for young people and people on low incomes
- Lack of digital access through, for example, limited reach and quality of broadband, which is increasingly seen as a social and economic disadvantage⁷⁶
- Perceptions that public spaces and public transport, particularly in the evenings may be unsafe
- Low-cost or taster activities which are provided for a limited time-period and then not sustained.
- Limited awareness of the full range of what is on offer and how to get involved.
- Lack of childhood engagement - those who did not experience cultural activities as children are significantly less likely to engage as adults⁷⁷.

⁷⁶ 'Digital Britain', DCMS, BIS (2009: 52)

⁷⁷ 'Taking Part', DCMS (2006)



5 Why is culture good for us?

Culture has many benefits, individual, societal and economic. It contributes to our sense of identity and inspires us to develop as individuals. It provides reasons for us to come together as a society and to celebrate our diversity and shared connections. It helps us create vibrant places in which to live, work, play and visit. It helps us learn and creates jobs.

Individual benefits from culture

- Widens our world view, helping build our capacity for understanding and navigating the world⁷⁸.
- Helps give us a sense of identity – to appreciate who we are and where we are from.
- Encourages creative thinking which helps people work through problems, traumas and issues⁷⁹.
- Plays an important role in improving the health and wellbeing of individuals in a variety of ways⁸⁰. Listening to music by mental health patients can significantly reduce agitation⁸¹. Dementia patients' functional motor activities can be preserved through social dancing which helps retain independence⁸².
- Participation in sport and physical activity has obvious and well-documented physical benefits to the individual, but physical activity can also make people feel better, helping with anxiety and depression and reducing stress⁸³.
- Play is recognised as a 'vital ingredient of a happy and healthy childhood, supporting children's physical, emotional, social and educational development'⁸⁴.

⁷⁸ 'Public value and the Arts in England: Discussion and conclusions of the arts debate', Arts Council England, Catherine Bunting (2007: 13)

⁷⁹ 'Encyclopaedia of Creativity', Mark Runco et al (1999: 253)

⁸⁰ 'Arts Health and Wellbeing' Arts Council England (2007: 4)

⁸¹ 'Arts in Health: a review of medical literature', Dr Rosalia Lelchuk Staricoff, Arts Council England (2004: 29)

⁸² 'Arts in Health: a review of medical literature', Dr Rosalia Lelchuk Staricoff, Arts Council England (2004: 28)

⁸³ 'Countryside Access Strategy for Shropshire 2008 – 2018', Shropshire County Council (2008: 46)

⁸⁴ 'The Play Strategy', DCSF (2008: 5)

- People who live nearer to green spaces tend to be more active, less obese and to live longer.⁸⁵ Recent NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) guidelines for health professionals highlighted the mental health benefits to older people of guided walks in the natural environment⁸⁶.

Societal benefits from culture

- Stronger communities: cultural participation and activities can form an empowering focal point around which people gather together.⁸⁷
- Community involvement and cohesion: people participating in cultural activities are 20% more likely to know 'many people' in their neighbourhood and 60% more likely to believe that 'many of their neighbours can be trusted'⁸⁸.
- Intergenerational relations: culture is a good vehicle via which young people and older people can get together more often, enabling them to find out how much they have in common and improve understanding of needs and aspirations⁸⁹.
- The voluntary arts sector: according to the DCMS, 'the voluntary arts sector is embedded in the grassroots of local communities and has a complex impact on developing vibrant and inclusive communities ... the sector plays an important role in sustaining cultural traditions and developing new artistic practice'⁹⁰.
- Active citizenship: culture provides opportunities for individuals to express themselves in a civic manner, and cultural activity has been employed throughout history to support and articulate political agendas, seen, for example during the counter cultures of the 1960s and the civil rights movement.
- Empowerment: the Government's recent White Paper 'Communities in Control – Real People, Real Power' espouses the importance of communities being empowered to take part in decisions around cultural provision and spending⁹¹.

⁸⁵ 'Be active, Be Healthy', Department of Health (2009: 40)

⁸⁶ 'Be active, Be Healthy', Department of Health (2009: 40)

⁸⁷ 'A Passion for Excellence – an improvement strategy for culture and sport', DCMS (2008: 8)

⁸⁸ Taking Part, DCMS, 2006

⁸⁹ Interactive Youth Summit DVD, Shropshire Children Services Participation Team (2008)

⁹⁰ 'Our Creative Talent: the voluntary and amateur arts in England', DCMS (2008: 10)

⁹¹ 'Communities in Control', Department of Communities and Local Government (2008)

- Safety: 70% of young people believe that a lack of positive activities provision leads to more youth crime⁹².
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour: provision of leisure facilities for young people can reduce anti-social behaviour. Recent Audit Commission research suggests that sport and leisure can engage young people, attracting those at highest risk of anti-social behaviour into more intensive developmental projects. Preventive projects are shown to be cost effective: a young person in the criminal justice system costs the tax payer over £200,000 by the time they are 16, but one given support to stay out costs less than £50,000.⁹³
- Satisfaction with local area: participation in cultural activity is linked to 10% more people being satisfied with where they live.⁹⁴
- Respect: Around 80% of people believe that participating in sport teaches respect for others and increases people's involvement in community activities⁹⁵.
- Diversity: cultural activity can help us celebrate diversity and in doing so help us construct a harmonious society, promoting understanding, acceptance and respect between different cultures and providing a shared space for celebrating our differences⁹⁶.

Economic benefits from culture

- Creative economy: over the past decade, the creative economy has grown twice as fast as the rest of the economy and now accounts for 7.3% of GDP – contributing £60 billion per year to the British economy – and employing two million people⁹⁷.
- Employment: In 2007, the cultural sector⁹⁸ in the West Midlands accounted for 10.1% of all regional employment, 14.5% of all businesses in the region and 12.5% of total regional Gross Value Added, from a turnover of nearly £18 billion per annum⁹⁹. 5.3% of

⁹² MORI (2002), as cited in 'A Passion for Excellent', Department for Media, Culture and Sport (2008: 8)

⁹³ 'Tired of Hanging Around', The Audit Commission, 2009

⁹⁴ Internal analysis of Taking Part Survey Data, DCMS, 2007

⁹⁵ MORI research (2004)

⁹⁶ DCMS 'What we do': http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/arts/4073.aspx/

⁹⁷ 'Creative Britain – New Talents for the New Economy' DCMS (2008:6)

⁹⁸ Culture is defined by Culture West Midlands as 'the arts, sport, heritage, parks and green space, play and the creative industries'

⁹⁹ 'Growing the Cultural Economy in the West Midlands' Culture West Midlands (2007: 1)

the workforce in Shropshire is employed in the cultural sector and 3.4% in Telford & Wrekin¹⁰⁰.

- **Leverage:** The sub-regions have several flagship cultural venues and developments that have attracted significant amounts of leverage funding including a £12m refurbishment of Blists Hill which attracted £10m of funding from Advantage West Midlands; the Ellesmere redevelopment which obtained over £1.1m of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, over £530,000 from the European Regional Development Fund and £100,000 from Advantage West Midlands via the Market Towns Initiative; and the 2005 refurbishment of Oakengates Theatre into The Place, a £1.4m project which attracted just under £300,000 of funding from the European Regional Development Fund.
- **Image:** Culture West Midlands¹⁰¹ believes that the strength of the cultural sector, and the unprecedented opportunities for growth, make it a key component of the regional economy¹⁰².
- **Productivity:** participation in cultural activity improves individual physical and mental well-being, which subsequently contributes to improved productivity for the region's economy¹⁰³. A new TUC guide suggests that the biggest lifestyle gains for workers can be made through policies that promote work-life balance and through provision of access to gyms, cycling, healthy eating and health surveillance¹⁰⁴.
- **Volunteering and skills development:** the cultural sector provides significant volunteering opportunities for individuals, which provide training, skills development and employment opportunities.¹⁰⁵ For vulnerable individuals, volunteering may provide a route into paid work, building confidence and skills bases. In the English voluntary arts sector alone, an estimated £48.9m of value is generated in the West Midlands.

Urban regeneration

¹⁰⁰ State of the Region Update Report: Culture Dataset, West Midlands Regional Observatory (2009)

¹⁰¹ This regional cultural consortium disbanded in March 2009 and the West Midlands Cultural Observatory has superseded its role of data and intelligence gathering for the cultural sector.

¹⁰² 'Growing the Cultural Economy in the West Midlands' Culture West Midlands (2007: 1)

¹⁰³ 'Growing the Cultural Economy in the West Midlands' Culture West Midlands (2007: 14)

¹⁰⁴ 'Research and Trends', TUC: http://www.tuc.org.uk/work_life/tuc-12800-f0.cfm

¹⁰⁵ 'Our Creative Talent: the voluntary and amateur arts in England', DCMS (2008: 45)

- Sense of place: culture's input into regeneration can significantly affect "sense of place", leading to strengthened communities, creativity and visitor economies. This is the role planned for the Southwater Development in Telford which will have a 'cultural hub', encompassing the Town Park, a new learning and media centre, a virtual gallery, new performance space, leisure pool and a refurbished ice-rink to broaden the retail and residential appeal daytime and evening.¹⁰⁶
- Increased tourism: Liverpool's stint as European Capital of Culture in 2008 highlighted the significant impact arts and culture can have on regeneration. 77% of first-time visitors during the year were influenced by the Capital of Culture status when deciding to visit.¹⁰⁷
- Sustainable community provision: Telford & Wrekin's new strategy, aligning sport and leisure with the Council's proposals for Building Schools for the Future (formally known locally as Campus Telford & Wrekin) - creating a series of sports and learning communities across the Borough. Each sports and learning community includes a range of accessible and affordable facilities and services and, where possible, links to plans for the regeneration of the Borough's Towns. There are a number of sports and learning communities which are currently being developed by the Council in conjunction with partners including AFC Telford United, Telford College of Arts & Community (TCAT), Hadley Learning Community, Lawn Tennis Association, Shropshire Basketball and other local sports clubs and National Governing Bodies for Sport.
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Rural regeneration

- Digital inclusion: DEFRA acknowledges the role that broadband Internet infrastructure plays in enterprise within rural economies: '[increased broadband access] may provide a new incentive for entrepreneurs to start and expand businesses in rural areas, though this may also depend on how quickly the infrastructure and market develops for higher bandwidths in rural areas'¹⁰⁸. In addition, the State of the Countryside 2007 report highlights that whilst broadband access in rural areas has improved significantly

¹⁰⁶ 'Southwater a new development at the heart of Telford', Transforming Telford (2007: 7)

¹⁰⁷ (2009: 6)

¹⁰⁸ 'Rural Strategy 2004', DEFRA (2004: 64)

since 2005, it lags behind urban areas in terms of higher broadband speeds¹⁰⁹.

- Rural creative industries: DEFRA's strategy also proposes a new creative vision and partnerships for the rural sector that are designed to deliver economic regeneration, environmental sustainability and social inclusion whilst helping communities to manage the radical changes taking place in the rural landscape¹¹⁰.
- Cultural attractors: The Ellesmere Sculpture initiative is a grassroots organisation that has grown out of a three-year transnational European touring sculpture exhibition. This includes development of The Ellesmere Sculpture Map, a major arts initiative, which it is hoped will have a long-term regenerative impact on the town and environs.¹¹¹
- Rural multi-use centres: these centres provide valuable services to rural areas, acting as a hub of sustainable activity such as the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre which contains a gallery, crafts showcase, local history centre, library, café, giftshop and information centre; Qube in Oswestry a charity community centre which has gallery space, runs workshops, training courses and outreach programmes; the Severn Centre, a community focused not for profit development in Highley which houses extensive sports facilities, meeting and conference rooms, ICT suites, a library and childcare facilities and SpArC in Bishop's Castle, a sport and arts centre that combines a range of facilities including a theatre, swimming pool, squash courts and art exhibition space.

Tourism

- Rural tourism: nationally, experts estimate that the rural tourism industry is worth around £15 billion to the economy¹¹². In Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, with 12.2m visitors a year, the visitor economy is worth £665m a year¹¹³
- Sports tourism: this involves travelling to take part in or to observe sport, and this is becoming an increasingly important reason for travel. The expansion and improvements in televised sport has actually increased interest in live sporting events and made athletes aware of events around the world. In addition to tourists with sport as the prime reason for travel, there are many others

¹⁰⁹ 'State of the Countryside', Commission for Rural Communities (2007: 32)

¹¹⁰ 'Investing in Rural Creativity: New Rural Arts Strategy', Littoral Arts Trust (2005: 1)

¹¹¹ <http://www.ellesmeresculpture.co.uk/about.html>

¹¹² 'Financial Boost for UK Rural Tourism':

http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/tourism/default.aspx

¹¹³ http://www.stmem.com/tourism_facts.htm

who choose destinations based partially on the availability and range of activities on offer, or because of the image of a place where sport and activity adds to the local colour (the sight of sailing boats on a lake for example).

Growth opportunities: The West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy (2007) highlights four key growth opportunities in relation to tourism, all of which are of significant relevance to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin:

- Conference and exhibitions – the conferences and exhibitions sector is estimated to be worth £6.6bn to the regional economy and supports 104,000 FTE jobs. In 2005, conferences and exhibitions attracted nearly 14m visitors and delegates to the West Midlands.
- Culture – theatre and classical music alone are worth £216m to the West Midlands. Culture is a key driver for overseas visitors, 1 in 5 cite culture as their prime motivation for visiting. It is one way to communicate authenticity and distinctiveness - something that visitors are increasingly seeking.
- Events and festivals – major sporting and cultural events in the region generated an additional £390m in 2005 supporting approximately 7,400 jobs. Events and festivals provide an opportunity to introduce new visitors to the region and encourage out-of-season visits.
- Food and drink – Money spent on eating out is up 102% in the last 10 years, there is an increasing recognition that food and drink is not only part of the visitor experience but can be an important factor in choosing one destination over another. Ludlow is a prime example of how to realise this potential.

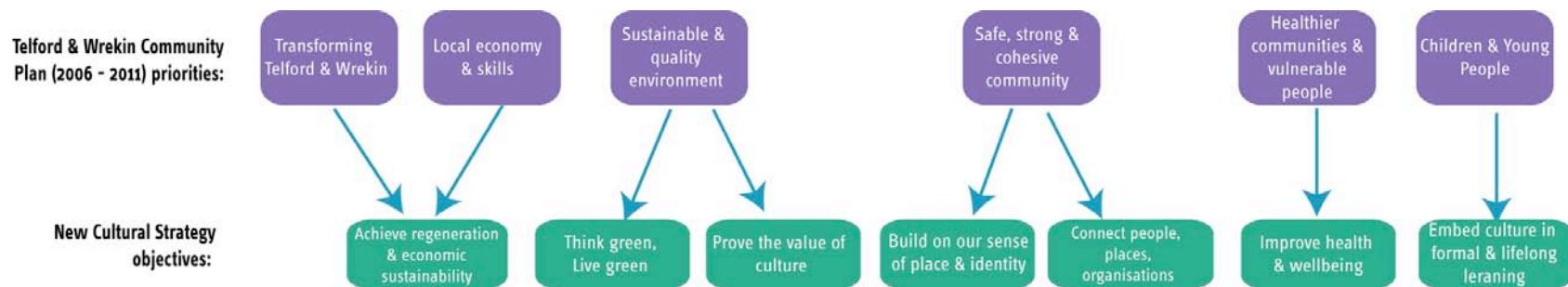
5.1 Strategic context

Local Authorities such as Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council don't have to provide or fund cultural activities – they choose to because they know how much it contributes to people's quality of life. As such the cultural sector has to make a strong case for the funding of culture by proving its contribution to central and local government agendas. The models below illustrate how the cultural strategy contributes to the overall aims of the local authorities as expressed in the Local Area Agreements.

Shropshire

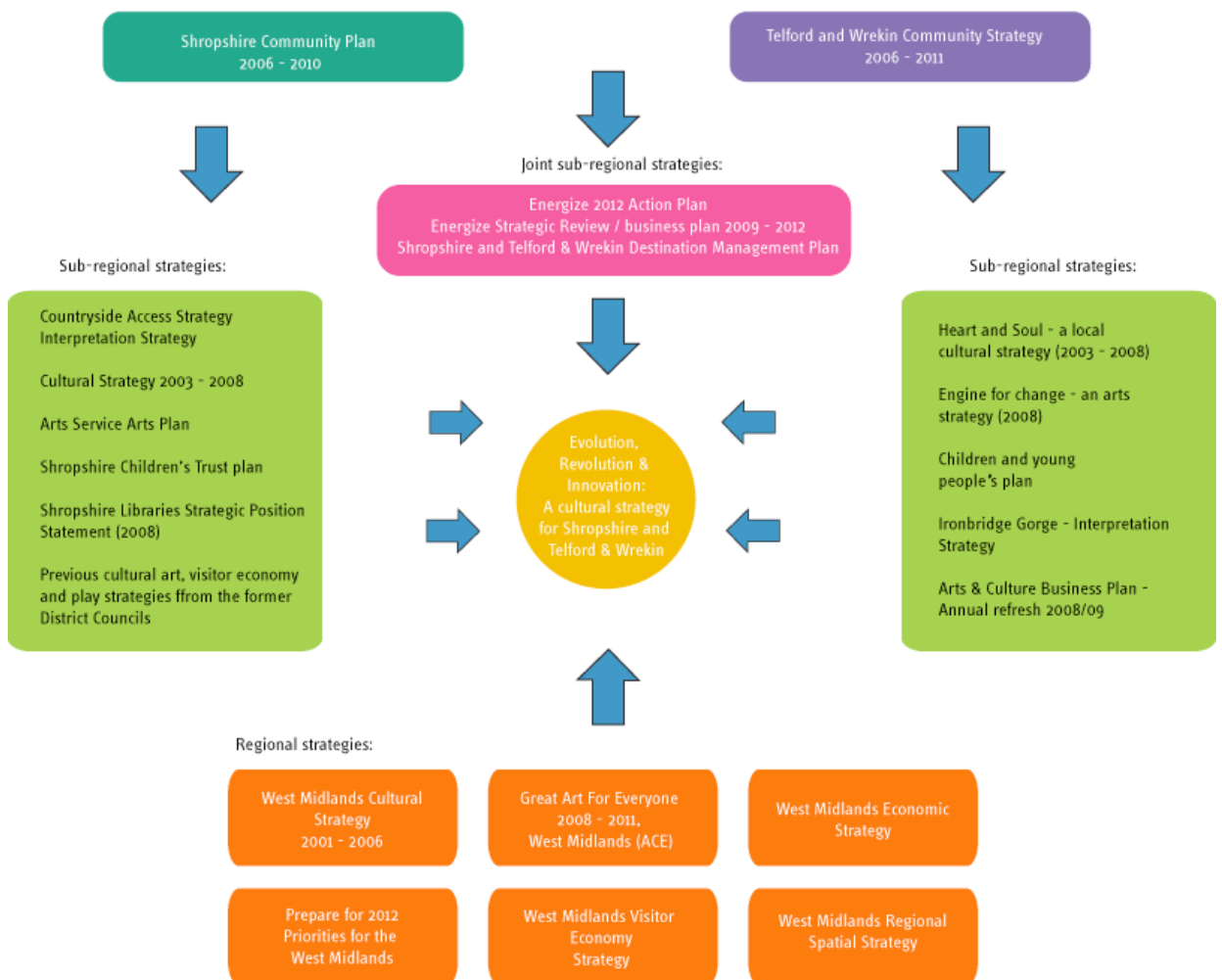


Telford & Wrekin



The wider strategic context

In drawing up this cultural strategy, a variety of previous and current sub-regional strategies were taken into account, alongside joint sub-regional strategies and region-wide strategies, as illustrated in the diagram below.





6 Issues and opportunities

This is a proactive strategy, which harnesses culture to inspire people and to enrich their lives.

To achieve this, we recognise that the strategy should build on where we have come from, embracing the evolution of our unique landscape, geology and biodiversity and reflecting our revolutionary industrial history. But it is not enough to simply celebrate the past. The strategy must also celebrate who we are and what we do now, making a difference to our lives today. And it must look ahead, recognising emerging demographic, social and leisure trends so that culture helps shape our lives in future.

From all the research and consultation undertaken, the following have emerged as important issues and opportunities for the strategy to address.

A broad definition of culture

Participation in cultural activity is often constrained by perceptions that cultural activities are for the few not the many. The strategy must address this issue by broadening people's awareness of what culture is and by describing culture in accessible terms.

Greater and wider engagement in culture

The strategy needs to prioritise the participation of those key groups of people who don't currently participate in cultural activities by addressing the barriers that hinder their involvement. This should include a specific focus on the needs of younger and older people, people of BME origin, migrant workers, people in rural areas, and people of lower social grades, all of whom participate less than other groups. It should also include recognition of the pockets of rural deprivation in North Shropshire and higher levels of deprivation in Telford & Wrekin.

More widespread and collaborative provision of culture

People want a spread of provision across the sub-region, particularly in rural areas, so that people feel they have local access to culture. An holistic focus on cultural provision should be adopted, embracing collaboration and partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors. This should include greater recognition of and support for grassroots providers and activities; support for cultural champions and catalysts where they exist or emerge within

communities and building on the high level of active participation, particularly in sport, arts and cultural sector volunteering.

Embrace the green agenda

The evolution of Shropshire's landscape and bio-diversity together with Telford's development as one of the greenest new towns, means that the sub-region already has a strong green positioning. There is scope to embrace this further and for it to become a distinctive feature of the sub-region's cultural agenda. This includes harnessing the emerging green conscience to develop greater environmental awareness and responsibility; further exploration of the potential for developing a unique further education specialism through a University of the Environment and for initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of culture. Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are also well placed to address the emerging tourism trends of more 'at home' holidays, the increasing short breaks market and for activity and wellbeing tourism.

Cultural and Creative Learning

There are significant opportunities to strengthen engagement with and use of culture in both formal and informal learning. The strategy needs to ensure that cultural providers engage with these opportunities and with particular initiatives including the Positive Activities for Young People agenda, the Learning Outside the Classroom manifesto and the Building Schools for the Future programme.

Celebration of values: authentic, independent, real, hand-crafted and green

These are the values that people ascribe to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. The strategy should ensure these are used to articulate a sense of identity and place and to encourage engagement of both residents and visitors by building on the increasing desire for authentic, local, handcrafted and fairly traded goods, food and drink by both residents and tourists.

The cultural and creative industries as economic drivers

The strategy must reflect the potential of the cultural and creative industries in economic development by supporting the development of skills and employment in these sectors.

Cultural Tourism

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are not as well-known to the outside world as they deserve to be. The Cultural Strategy should address this by developing a more strategic approach to cultural tourism and

strengthening the cultural tourism offer and its promotion, giving people more reasons to stay longer and to return. There are particular opportunities around London 2012; the associated Cultural Olympiad and the strong fit with the growth opportunities identified in the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy, including events and festivals, culture, conferences and exhibitions, and food and drink.

Communicating and connecting with users

People told us that Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin actually have a wealth of cultural provision but that information about what is available, where and how to access it, is not as easily accessible as it could be. There are opportunities to provide more coordinated and comprehensive information on places to go, things to do and how to become involved, particularly engaging with changing media technologies and associated communication trends.

Prove the value of culture

Those who provide and engage with cultural activities in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin are powerful advocates of its impact on their lives. They feel however that there is a need to shout louder and stronger about the value of culture to people's fundamental quality of life, in order to ensure continued provision and funding of cultural activities.



7 Vision, aims objectives

Vision

Our vision is simple.

We want culture to inspire us all and to shape how we live, learn, work and play.

Values

The cultural strategy celebrates the values that many people have told us they most associate with the sub-region of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, which is that it is:

- Authentic
- Independent
- Real
- Hand-crafted
- Green.

Aims

Our aim is for culture to enrich the life of every resident in and visitor to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin by helping us:

- Celebrate who we are and where we live
- Connect with other people and places
- Be healthy
- Learn creatively
- Work better
- Have fun

Objectives

We have seven key objectives we want to achieve through this Cultural Strategy. These are to:

1. Improve health and wellbeing

2. Think Green and Live Green
3. Provide cultural and creative learning
4. Achieve regeneration and economic sustainability
5. Build on our sense of place and sense of identity
6. Connect people, places and organisations
7. Prove the value of culture.

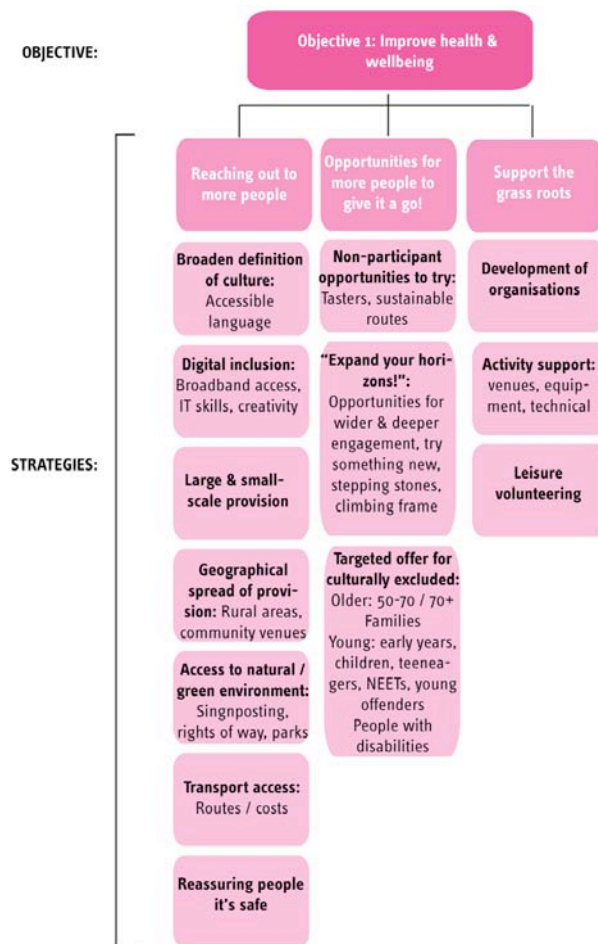
These objectives will be achieved through a series of strategies which are described in the following section.



8 How we will achieve our vision

For each of the seven objectives we want to achieve, we have identified a range of strategies – the different ways – through which we intend to raise the aims and objectives of the Cultural Strategy.

8.1 Objective 1: Improve health and wellbeing



There is significant evidence that participation in cultural activities leads to improved physical and mental health and an enhanced sense of overall well-being. We want culture to help improve our physical health and mental wellbeing. We will do this by:

Reaching out to more people

We will reach and engage as many people as possible in cultural activities by offering cultural provision in different ways, in different

places and at different scales, through:

- Raising awareness of the broad range of activity that is included in 'culture' and using accessible language to describe culture, to make sure that it is inclusive and everyone is aware of the opportunities
- Promoting and supporting digital inclusion, particularly in rural areas, through greater access to and improved consistency and quality of broadband
- Providing activity that is both small and large-scale
- Offering geographically spread provision, particularly in rural areas
- Providing transport access so that public transport limitations don't prevent participation
- Making use of facilities for community use, e.g. rural schools, church halls, community and village halls and green spaces
- Continuing to reassure people that transport and the public realm are safe environments.

Opportunities for more people to Give it a Go!

We will create opportunities for people to try new cultural activities or to deepen or maintain their involvement and pro-actively encourage this participation by:

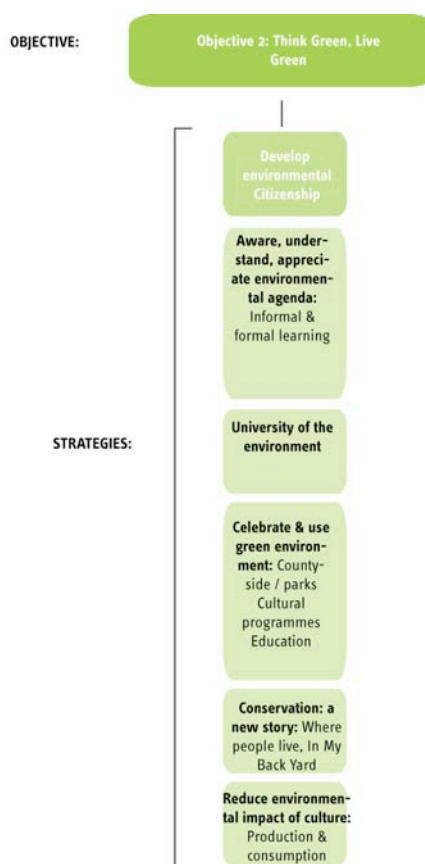
- Creating sustainable opportunities for non-participants to sample different cultural activities at little cost to themselves
- Helping people expand their horizons by providing stepping-stones to help people move onto more frequent or deeper involvement
- Developing pro-active, targeted campaigns for key groups including 'younger' older people (aged 50-70); 'older' older people (70+); early years and children; young people, particularly those not in education, employment or training or young offenders or those at risk; families; people with disabilities and people of BME backgrounds.

Support the Grassroots

We will ensure as much culture is delivered as locally as possible by supporting grassroots and third-sector organisations to provide activity. This sector is well established in Shropshire but needs greater development in Telford & Wrekin. We will do this by:

- Advising on organisational set-up, development, management and funding of grassroots cultural organisations and activity
- Providing support for delivery of activities through access to venues, equipment and specialist support
- Supporting leisure volunteering programmes and those who champion culture in local areas

8.2 Objective 2: Think green, live green



We want to actively involve people in moving towards living in a more sustainable way, one that is concerned about the wider social and environmental impact of the way we live, including our cultural activities. We want to ensure that our cultural activities embrace and celebrate the natural rhythms of the landscape. We believe that not only is this a necessity in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin but that it can become a defining characteristic and that this can be achieved through:

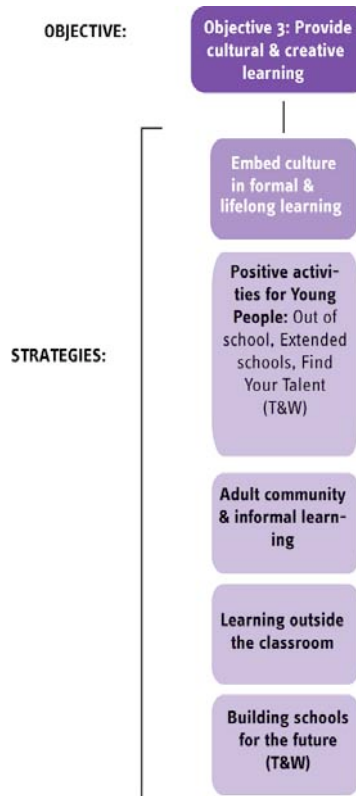
Develop environmental citizenship¹¹⁴

We will do this by:

- Changing the story from conservation as something that happens to green spaces at one-step removed from our daily life, to something that embraces all parts of our life and starts in our own back yard.
- Raising awareness, understanding and appreciation of the environmental agenda and how people can take individual action, through both formal and informal learning
- Placing the environmental agenda centre-stage in our learning activities through the creation of a University of the Environment
- Celebrating and using the natural environment as a subject, resource and location for education and cultural programmes
- Reducing the environmental impact of culture, both when it is being produced and consumed
- Supporting the development of Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site as a green tourism leader and one of the world's most sustainable World Heritage Sites.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.environmentalcitizenship.net/what.html>

8.3 Objective 3: Provide cultural and creative learning



We want culture to be an integral part of education and learning, whether this is in support of the National Curriculum or for personal enjoyment. Not only do we want people of all ages to be able to learn about culture, we also want culture to help us learn in inspiring and creative ways. We will do this by:

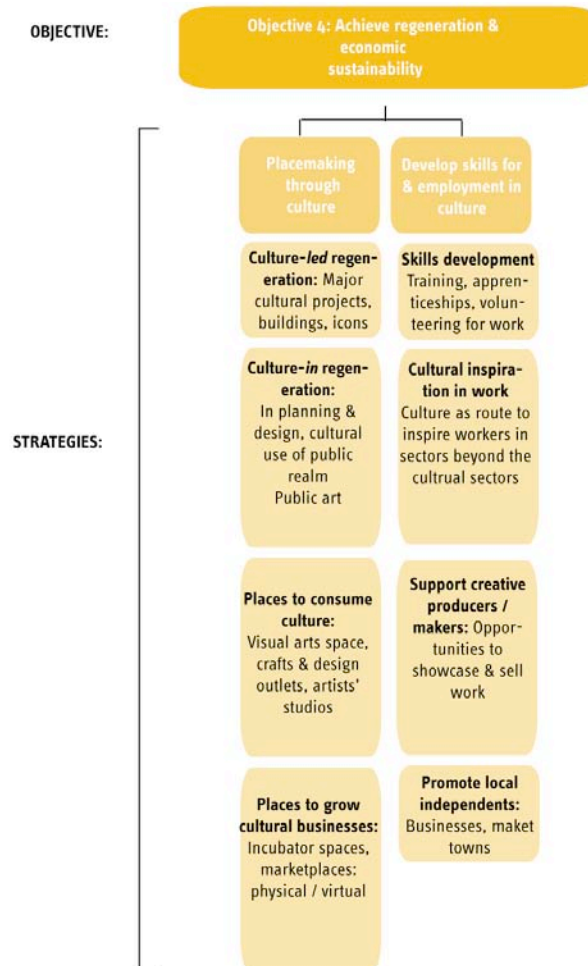
Embed culture in formal and lifelong learning

This will involve:

- Working with formal education providers to ensure that they make best use of cultural organisations and creative methods within their on-site teaching at all levels, including early years, primary, secondary and FE and in the Building Schools for the Future programme.
- Encouraging cultural practitioners to extend their work to educational settings

- Embracing DCSF's Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto¹¹⁵ to help us encourage educational institutions to use off-site cultural facilities
- Involving young people in positive activities and out-of-school learning through the Extended Schools network, Find Your Talent and other initiatives
- Ensuring a strong and wide cultural offer in lifelong learning

8.4 Objective 4: Achieve regeneration and economic sustainability



¹¹⁵ www.lotc.org.uk

We want culture to create inspiring places to live, work and play and to help us develop and sustain skills for employment and jobs. We will do this by:

Placemaking through culture

- Pioneering major culture-*led* regeneration projects
- Culture-*in* regeneration - ensuring that culture is embraced in all regeneration to help create culturally vibrant buildings and public spaces
- Consideration of additional visual arts, crafts and design exhibition spaces

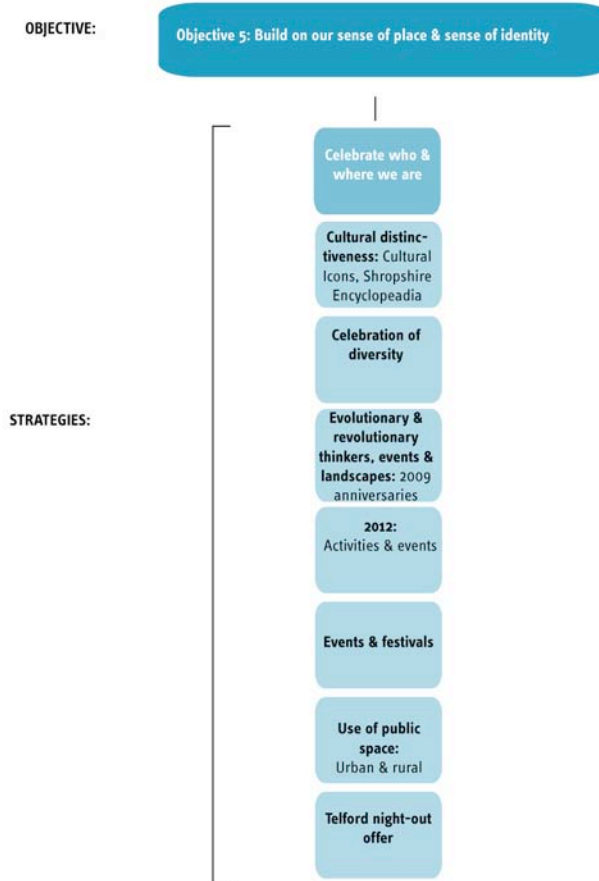
Develop skills for and employment in culture

Sustaining and developing employment in the cultural and creative industries through:

- Development of cultural sector skills through training, apprenticeships, volunteering and continuing professional development for existing practitioners
- Providing physical and virtual marketplaces for producers to showcase and sell local products including visual arts, craft, design, food
- Supporting cultural entrepreneurialism by providing support to and promotion for local independent cultural sector businesses and market towns
- Developing programmes of cultural inspiration for the wider workforce
- Reviewing the need for incubator spaces for cultural and creative practitioners and businesses



Objective 5: Build on our sense of place and sense of identity



We want culture to help us know and celebrate the character and spirit of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and for us to feel a sense of belonging to where we live and the people we live among. We will do this by:

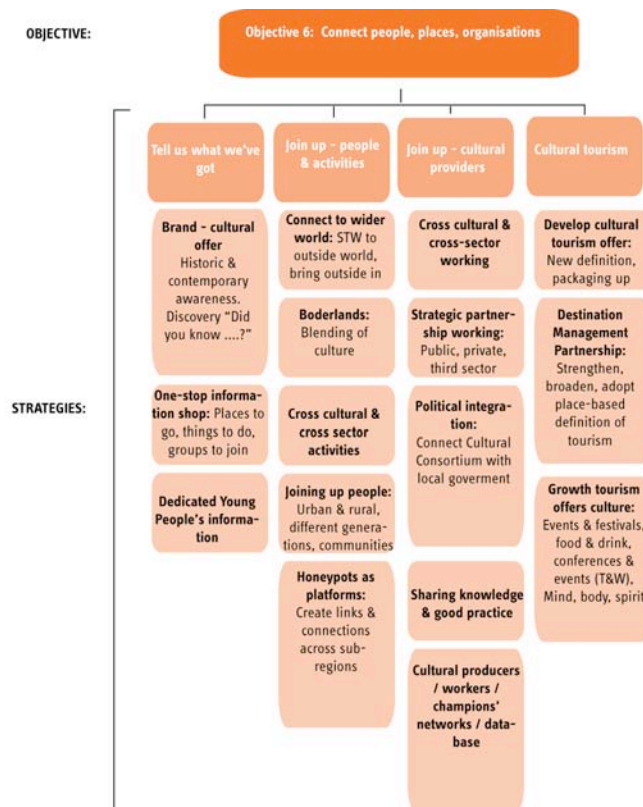
Celebrate who and where we are

We will develop and support the wide range of events, activities and festivals, which exist and develop new ones to celebrate the cultural distinctiveness of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, including:

- A good night out – developing a night-time cultural offer, particularly in Telford & Wrekin
- Evolution and the natural landscape. Our landscape, geology and biodiversity and our current relationship with it

- Industrial innovation, revolutionary thinkers and the influences on today, building on the Celebration of Imagination 2009. The anniversaries of Darby, Darwin and Penny Brookes
- Shropshire's Welsh border history and territory
- Artistic and literary icons and traditions, including A. E. Housman and Wilfred Owen, while celebrating contemporary creativity
- Sporting traditions and heroes, past and present; Shropshire as the birthplace of the modern Olympic movement and our involvement in London 2012; Webb, the first Channel swimmer.
- The diversity of the people who have settled and live here

8.6 Objective 6: Connect: People, Places and Organisations



We want to bring people together to experience culture, to develop partnerships between groups and organisations to deliver culture and to connect Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin with the world beyond. We will do this by:

Tell us what we've got

We will inform people about and inspire them to engage in culture, by:

- Building the cultural 'brand' by telling the stories, past and present of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, along the lines of "Did you know..."
- Creating a one-stop information source which will offer comprehensive information on places to go, things to do, groups to join and how to do this, building on and linking with existing sources
- Creating a dedicated young people's information source building on the strengths of Culturezone and Youth Zone in Telford
- Using the continuing investment of the DCMS / Museums Libraries and Archives Council's Renaissance in the Regions programme through Ironbridge Gorge Museums to engage new audiences in museums, heritage and the wider cultural offer

Join up people and activities

We will use cultural activities to bring people together, from different parts of the world, different local areas, different communities, and different age groups. We will do this by:

- Creating cultural programmes and activities which link Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin with the world beyond
- Using honeypot attractions and activities to signpost and spin people off to other places and activities e.g. Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Theatre Severn, Ironbridge Gorge Museums.

Join up Cultural Providers

We will facilitate the delivery of more culture with a greater impact by working in partnership. We will do this by:

- Encouraging cross-cultural working and enabling this work to be sustained
- Develop programmes with cross-sector partners including for example: health, children's and young people's services.
- Continued engagement in regional and national partnerships cultural partnerships including the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council's Renaissance programme for museums.

- Making strong connections between the Cultural Consortium and third and private sector facilitators and providers to ensure culture is delivered strategically and holistically
- Connecting the Cultural Consortium more effectively with local government, particularly the parish and town councils, through the Shropshire Association of Local Councils
- Sharing knowledge and best-practice throughout the sector
- Building a database of cultural and creative organisations and practitioners as a resource for people creating partnerships and developing initiatives

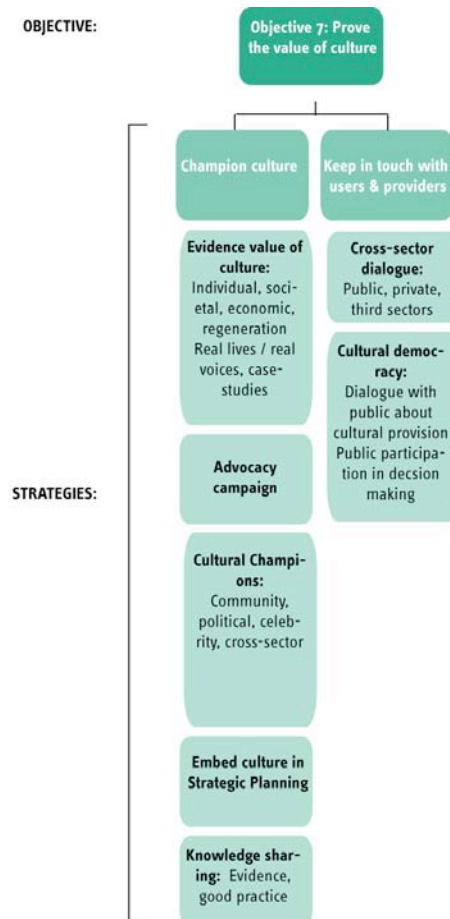
Cultural Tourism

We will strengthen the approach to cultural tourism overall and position culture strongly within sub-regional tourism strategies by:

- Developing an approach to cultural tourism based on sense of place and identity rather than on visitor attractions
- Working with Tourism West Midlands and the Destination Management Partnership to develop a more strategic and holistic approach to cultural tourism engaging a wide range of providers
- Prioritising the cultural tourism growth areas identified and supported by the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy¹¹⁶, including festivals, food and drink and for Telford & Wrekin specifically, conferences and events
- Developing a “Mind, Body, Spirit Wellbeing” tourism offer embracing the combined strengths of the natural environment and cultural offers
- Developing environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism offers
- Packaging-up cultural offers to provide a more holistic offer beyond the current attraction lists, to encourage people to engage more deeply or widely; and to stay for longer and to return

¹¹⁶ ‘West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy’, Advantage West Midlands (2008)

8.7 Objective 7: Prove the Value of Culture



We want to make sure that culture is valued both by those who engage with and those who fund culture. We also want to make sure that people take part in discussions and contribute to decision-making about cultural provision. We will achieve this by:

Champion Culture

We will champion culture by:

- Gathering evidence of its impact on a range of individual, societal and economic agendas and providing real-world, real-life stories which illustrate the impact of culture in participants' own words
- Developing cultural champions who advocate for culture at a strategic level, Local Authority Heads of Service and leaders of cross-sector partner organisations

- Embedding culture in strategic planning within the councils, particularly Telford & Wrekin
- Creating community cultural champions who advocate for and encourage participation in culture at a local level, including decision-influencers and celebrities
- Disseminating knowledge about the impact of culture

Keep In Touch

We will keep in touch with those who fund and provide culture in the sub-regions and those who engage with culture by:

- Ensuring that the Cultural Consortium has a cross-sector focus, embracing the public, private and voluntary sector funders and providers
- Giving the public a voice in what culture is provided and the opportunity to respond to service provision through an on-going formal feedback mechanism.



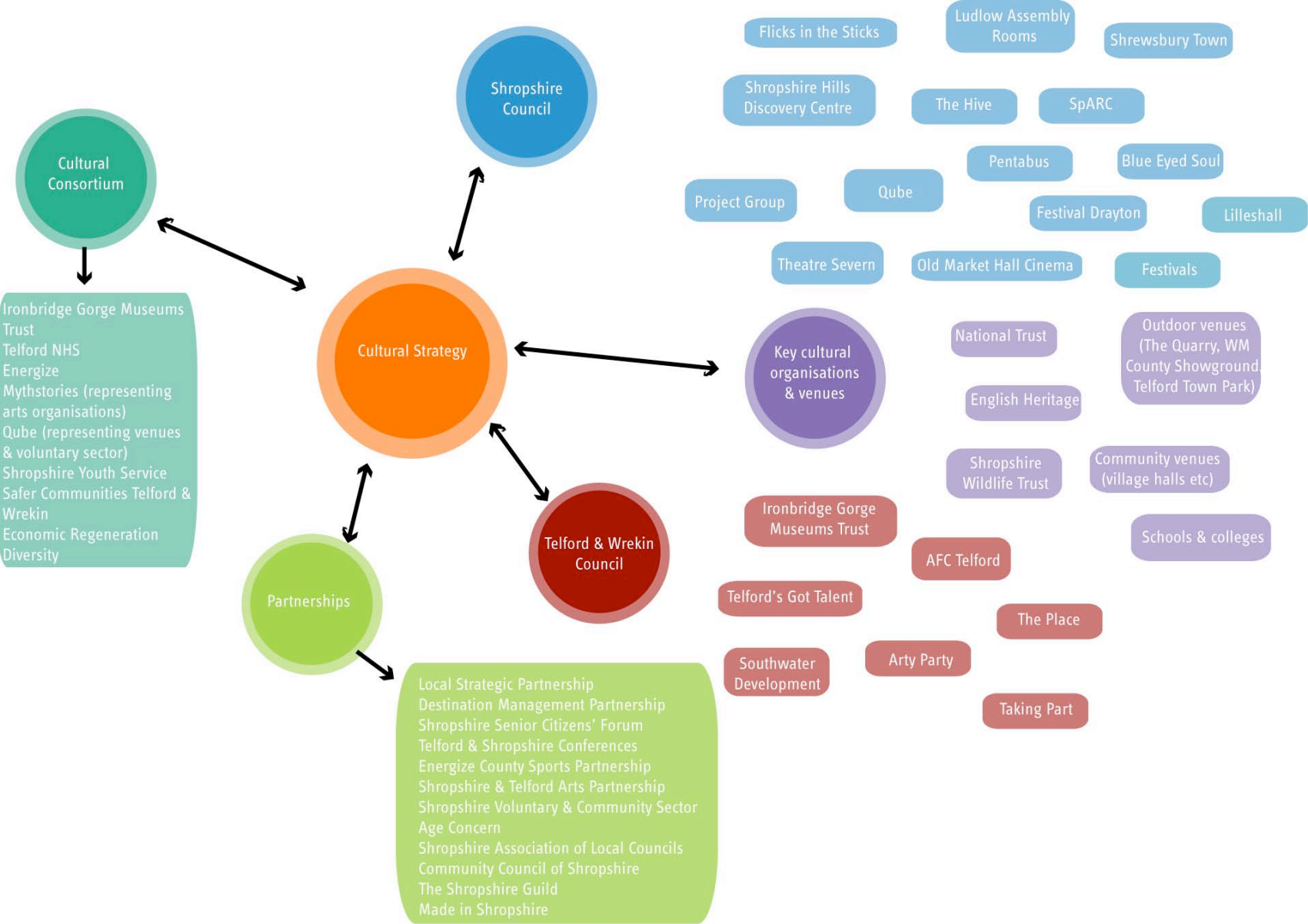
9 Action Plan

This strategy recognises that there is already a significant amount of cultural provision, activity and engagement in both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. It also recognises that there are different strengths and weaknesses in culture in the two areas so a different Action Plan has been developed for each area.

There are two sections to each Action Plan:

- A model illustrating the range of providers, and their strategies where applicable, who will continue to be involved in delivering culture and achieving the aims of the Cultural Strategy in each area.
- Areas for development: gaps in provision or activity, which need addressing in order to fulfil the aims and objectives of the Cultural Strategy. The delivery timescale for each action will be finalised in time for the strategy's official publication.

Key Cultural Providers in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin



9.1 Areas for Development - Shropshire

The following areas for development were identified following a scoping activity that identified the level of current activity within the Shropshire sub-region that contributed to each of the new cultural strategy's objectives. The areas for development have been identified where there are currently low levels of activity contributing to the cultural strategy's objectives and strategies.

9.1.1 Objective 1: Improve health & wellbeing

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Broaden the definition of culture: Position Paper to be issued to key stakeholders and partners	Cultural Consortium	TBC
List of credos to act as foundations of strategy	Cultural Consortium	TBC

9.1.2 Objective 2: Think Green, Live Green

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Reduce environmental impact of culture: Appoint an environmental champion to work with cultural providers	Cultural Consortium	TBC
University of the Environment – ensure strong links with the cultural sector and cross-partner working	Assistant Director, Culture & Leisure	TBC
Celebrate & use green environment: Development of the Playbuilder Programme and more informal play areas	Outdoor Recreation, Shropshire Council	TBC

9.1.3 Objective 3: Provide cultural and creative learning

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
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Learning outside the classroom: Develop closer links between learning outside the classroom initiatives and children and young people's services	Children & Young People's Service	TBC
Positive activities for young people: Launch an advocacy campaign to involve more people in arts and festivals	Principal Arts Development Officer	TBC

9.1.4 Objective 4: Achieve regeneration and economic sustainability

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Culture- <i>in</i> regeneration: Develop a public art strategy	Principal Arts Development Officer	TBC
Places to consume culture: Driving the development of a visual arts facility within the Music Hall development	Business Development Manager, Culture & Leisure	TBC
Places to grow cultural businesses: Continuing to support cultural businesses and reviewing the need for further demand and skills development via a joint scoping study across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin	Economic Regeneration and Principal Arts Development Officer	TBC
Cultural inspiration in work: Explore the potential positive contributions of cultural activity to the local workforce and develop appropriately	Cultural Consortium	TBC

9.1.5 Objective 5: Build on our sense of place and sense of identity

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Celebrate who and where we are: Building on the work to broaden	Principal Arts Development Officer	TBC

the definition of culture and existing work contributing to NI11, develop a cultural advocacy campaign to raise awareness of culture: 'this is culture', 'have a go!' (c.f Objective 6)		
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9.1.6 Objective 6: Connect people, places and organisations

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
One-Stop information shop: Development of a One-Stop Shop for Information (expansion of Discover Shropshire)	Business Development Manager, Culture & Leisure	TBC
Assess and develop how the Cultural Consortium promotes strategic partnership working and more effective networking within the private and third sectors, and how this is integrated within the L.As	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Sharing knowledge of good practice: Exploring the most effective way of sharing knowledge of good practise	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Develop cultural tourism offer: Build on the full range of the cultural offer within the sub-regions; explore the potential for more 'packaging-up'; and develop a more active relationship with the Destination Management Partnership in order to embed cultural tourism within their priorities	Cultural Consortium	TBC

9.1.7 Objective 7: Prove the value of culture

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
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Evidence value of culture: Further develop evaluation tools and embed these within activities	Principal Arts Development Officer	TBC
Cultural Champions: Explored the potential for developing and supporting Cultural Champions within the wider community	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Cultural democracy: Ensuring that public consultation is facilitated regularly, particularly in relation to the key actions of the Cultural Strategy's Action Plan	Principal Arts Development Officer	TBC

9.2 Areas for Development – Telford & Wrekin

The following areas for development were identified following a scoping activity that identified the level of current activity within the Telford & Wrekin sub-region that contributed to each of the new cultural strategy's objectives. The areas for development have been identified where there are currently low levels of activity contributing to the cultural strategy's objectives strategies.

9.2.1 Objective 1: Improve health & wellbeing

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Broaden the definition of culture: Position Paper to be issued to key stakeholders and partners	Cultural Consortium	TBC
List of credos to act as foundations of strategy	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Support the grassroots: Development of strategy to support Grassroots volunteers in leisure and culture	Shared Leisure Commissioner / Culture Commissioner	TBC

9.2.2 Objective 2: Think Green, Live Green

Action	Driver / responsible	Time-
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	officers / stakeholder	scale
Reduce environmental impact of culture: Appoint an environmental champion to work with cultural providers	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Appoint an environmental champion to work with cultural providers	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Celebrate & use green environment: Development of the Playbuilder Programme and more informal play areas	Parks & Recreation	TBC

9.2.3 Objective 3: Provide cultural and creative learning

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Learning outside the classroom: Develop closer links between learning outside the classroom initiatives and children and young people's services	Creative Arts Team in Children & Young People's Service	TBC
Positive activities for young people: Launch an advocacy campaign for Creative Arts Team Children and Young People	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC

9.2.4 Objective 4: Achieve regeneration and economic sustainability

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Culture- <i>in</i> regeneration: Develop a public art strategy	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC
Culture- <i>in</i> regeneration: strengthening culture within priority planning around public realm and regeneration	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC
Places to consume culture: Supporting the Southwater	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and	TBC

Development and forging links with its visual arts, media and learning centre	Public Information	
Places to consume culture: Further facilitating sport and learning communities by increased number of sports and multi-use / community-led venues building on the success of developments such as the Tennis Centre at Hadley	Leisure Commissioner	TBC
Places to grow cultural businesses: Continuing to support cultural businesses and reviewing the need for further demand and skills development via a joint scoping study across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin	Economic Regeneration and Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC
Cultural inspiration in work: Explore the potential positive contributions of cultural activity to the local workforce and develop appropriately	Cultural Consortium	TBC

9.2.5 Objective 5: Build on our sense of place and sense of identity

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Telford night-out offer: Develop Telford's night-out offer within the context of the Southwater Development	Economic Regeneration and Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC
Events & festivals: Sustain existing events and develop future events and festivals	Arts Development Team	TBC
Celebrate who and where we are: Building on the work to broaden the definition of culture, develop a cultural advocacy campaign to raise awareness of culture: 'this is culture', 'have a go!' (c.f Objective	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC

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9.2.6 Objective 6: Connect people, places and organisations

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Dedicated young people's information: Development of a One-Stop Shop for Information, with a particular focus on youth provision	Creative Arts Team and Integrated Youth Arts Teams in Children & Young People's Service	TBC
One-Stop information shop: Investigate linking information sources and how best to connect to Shropshire	Public Information Office	TBC
Assess and develop how the Cultural Consortium promotes strategic partnership working and more effective networking within the private and third sectors, and how this is integrated within the L.As	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Sharing knowledge of good practice: Exploring the most effective way of sharing knowledge of good practise	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Cultural producers / workers networks / database: Develop the network, hold networking meetings to support the database and create opportunities	Arts Development	TBC
Develop cultural tourism offer: Build on the full range of the cultural offer within the sub-regions; explore the potential for more 'packaging-up'; and develop a more active relationship with the Destination Management Partnership in order to embed cultural tourism within their priorities	Cultural Consortium	TBC

9.2.7 Objective 7: Prove the value of culture

Action	Driver / responsible officers / stakeholder	Time-scale
Evidence value of culture: Work towards developing evaluation tools and embed these within activities	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC
Cultural Champions: Develop Cultural Champions at a senior level within Telford and Wrekin Council who will generate and disperse evidence proving the value of culture	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC
Cultural Champions: Explored the potential for developing and supporting Cultural Champions within the wider community	Cultural Consortium	TBC
Cultural democracy: Ensuring that public consultation is facilitated regularly, particularly in relation to the key actions of the Cultural Strategy's Action Plan	Commissioner for Arts, Culture and Public Information	TBC

10 Measuring our success

We have no doubt that culture makes a significant difference to people's lives. It inspires us, improves our health, helps us learn creates jobs and attracts tourists to visit us. To ensure that cultural activities are recognised, supported and funded, we not only need to believe in the difference it makes, we also need to prove the value of culture.

This will involve gathering evidence of the cultural, social, economic and environmental impact of culture, on both individuals and communities. There is much secondary evidence of this value, which can be drawn upon, but we also need to undertake primary research to ensure that we provide robust and quantified evidence of impact, which is specific to Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

This evidence has to illustrate the impact of the full range of cultural activity on both individuals and communities and importantly, show how culture contributes to Shropshire Council's and Telford & Wrekin Council's Local Area Agreements and the National Indicators by which the Local Authorities measure achievement of their plans.

This evidence will be gathered by all those involved in providing cultural activities, monitoring their activities and undertaking research with a representative sample of users across the full range of cultural activities on a regular basis.

Shropshire Council has already led the way in this, in its development of the Value of Culture Framework, which agreed top-line performance indicators and provided a toolkit to help cultural organisations measure how cultural activities contribute to people's knowledge, skills and confidence; sense of physical or mental well-being; employability and sense of community belonging. This framework is being developed further to enable the success of the cultural strategy to be evaluated.



11 Appendices

Photography by Sabine Hutchinson, Jim Ozanne

11.1 Cultural Atlas

Available at [link to be supplied in final version]

11.2 Shropshire Cultural Consortium membership

Anne Taylor, Director of Business & Investment, Transforming Telford
Chris Child, Sports Partnership Manager, Shropshire Council
Sian Kerry, Director, Arts Alive
Ali Quarrell, Mythstories Museum of Fable
Kal Parkash, Diversity Officer, Shropshire Council
Martin Stephens , Principal Youth Officer, Shropshire Council
Psyche Hudson, Arts & Culture Manager, Telford & Wrekin Council
Steve Miller, Chief Executive The Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
Sue Goodwin, Head of Arts and Development, Shropshire Council
Tom Currie, Safer Communities Strategic Unit Manager, Telford & Wrekin Council
Vicki Pike, Senior Health Improvement Manager, Neighbourhood, Older People and BME, Telford & Wrekin Primary Care Trust
Laurel Roberts, Director, Qube, Oswestry

11.3 Definition of terms

We have tried to use plain English in writing this strategy but just in case there are some terms that aren't self-explanatory, we've included some definitions here.

Cultural Tourism

Tourism that focuses on the culture, and cultural environments including landscapes of the destination, the values and lifestyles, heritage, visual and performing arts, industries, traditions and leisure pursuits of the local population and host community. It can include attendance at cultural events, visits to museums and heritage places and mixing with local people. It should not be regarded as a definable niche within the broad range of tourism activities, but encompasses all experiences absorbed by the visitor to a place that is beyond their own living environment. (ICOMOS, 2002).

Play

Play can be defined as 'freely chosen, personally directed, intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child' (NPFA, 2000, as quoted in DCMS, Play and Exercise in Early Years, 2008) or 'what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons' (DCMS, Getting Serious About Play, 2004).