

# **Stronger Together through Inspirational Culture**

## **A Cultural Strategy for Northumberland 2011-2016**

*Draft*

### **1. Executive Summary**

*To be added in final version*

### **2. Introduction**

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland seeks to balance and integrate the social, economic and environmental components of life in Northumberland. It outlines an aspirational long term vision for delivering a fundamental step change to the quality of life within the communities of Northumberland.

To maintain clarity of purpose and coherence it is essential that Northumberland's planning processes and documents are consistent with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), which is currently being refreshed. The draft cultural strategy 'Stronger Together through Inspirational Culture' has been drawn together in the context of this work.

As our residents, businesses, visitors, and public sector face a climate of economic uncertainty together, celebrating and investing in culture may seem a distraction, a luxury we can little afford. In fact, it lies at the heart of what really makes life worth living in Northumberland. It can play an essential role in releasing our potential, transforming our aspirations and addressing the distinctive needs of our county in a sustainable way.

We take a wide view of culture here, including heritage, creativity, tourism, film, arts, libraries, sport, parks and green spaces, events, festivals and play. Culture is also about shared memories, experiences and identity, diverse cultural, religious and historic backgrounds and what is valuable to pass on to future generations. Whether in terms of quality of life, prosperity and jobs, educational and skills attainment, healthy living, community cohesion or a sense of place, through innovative partnerships and support networks the cultural sector can help deliver the long term vision for Northumberland.

As well as visitors many local people currently take part in cultural activity: over half of adults go to a museum or gallery at least once a year (56%); over half take in sport and active recreation at least once a month (51%), whilst 40% of our County's voluntary organisations see leisure, sport, arts, music and recreation as their main activity.

### **3. Context**

Northumberland is characterised in the main by expansive open stretches of countryside, much of which are breathtaking in landscape quality. Although home to almost 311,000 people, nobody lives in a settlement with more than 39,000 residents. Hence, Northumberland is the least populated county in England.

Northumberland's economy cannot be divorced from that of Tyneside – almost a third of the workforce commute to Tyne and Wear on a daily basis although a greater proportion live and work within the county's boundaries. In turn, the county also

benefits from in-migration from Tyne and Wear, both for work and for the distinctive culture, leisure and tourism offers that the county provides. The attraction of operating in a rural setting close to the urban centre also appeals to many entrepreneurs and enterprises who have chosen to locate here.

Despite high performance in some instances, overall economic performance is poor. Disposable income levels are significantly lower than both the regional and national equivalents. Unemployment remains broadly consistent with the national level, but the average wage is significantly lower. This is because many of the available jobs – particularly in the north and west of the county – are seasonal, part-time or relatively unskilled. There are significant concentrations, principally within the former coalfield area, of working-age residents who are excluded from work. They may be trapped in the “benefits” culture, have a long-term illness, struggle to read and write, may care for others (children or elderly relatives), or do not have the wherewithal to travel. For some communities, the need to reduce worklessness and prevent poverty is a key challenge.

Northumberland is a special place – somewhere that retains a strong identity, stemming from the unique combination of its landscape, location and heritage. Life in the county is authentic; it is unspoilt, rugged and genuine. From this, there is a shared sense of unity and belonging, an affinity among residents not only with each other but also with where they live. Equally though, there is no such thing as a typical Northumbrian community. It is a place full of contrasts and contradictions that reflect the wealth of different inherent customs and experiences

The countryside and coastline of Northumberland is truly breathtaking. It is characterised by rolling hills, prominent crags, sparkling rivers, and spectacular beaches. Large open expanses of space and sky only serve to heighten its beauty and tranquillity. In essence, the environment is at the core of life in Northumberland. It reflects our past activity and still provides a foundation of the local economy.

#### **4. Why invest in Culture?**

##### ***Culture helps to make Northumberland Jobs rich***

Leisure and tourism is one of Northumberland’s most important economic sectors. It creates jobs and brings around £650m into the county each year. We know through research that the key driver for this is the uniqueness of Northumberland’s culture – our festivals, events, food and arts – as well as our spectacular landscapes and built heritage. We have all the right natural assets to become an even more welcoming, successful visitor destination; our challenge now is to enhance our year round offer and take full advantage of our product in all areas of the county.

Similarly the creative industries contribute much to our economy and as one of our fastest growing sectors, offer real promise for further development. The cultural sector also has a major role to play in stimulating and nurturing the skills base, creativity and confidence of local people in all areas of employment; promoting shared resources, venues and expertise, design-led innovation and problem-solving, while offering opportunities for new businesses and social entrepreneurship.

##### ***Culture encourages happy, healthy living for all***

Physical activity and sports have a valuable role to play in inspiring healthy living and reducing our dependence on health care resources, particularly when it comes to narrowing the health inequalities between Northumberland’s “haves” and the “have

nots". Whether through child's play and adventure, fitness facilities for adults, or escape into our green spaces, we give pleasure and pride to people of all ages and abilities while challenging their bodies and minds.

But the health and wellbeing benefits of cultural engagement go far beyond exercise and sporting prowess. Cultural volunteering also empowers thousands of people to pursue active, purposeful lives in our county. A majority of cultural volunteering in Northumberland is done by the 50+ age group, but demand and opportunities are growing for volunteering experiences to become a channel for developing the talents of young people, grow the self-esteem and skills of the work-less, and empower new graduates to secure jobs in the region.

### ***Culture nurtures community spirit and a sense of place***

In a county with both a strong rural character and varied urban heartlands, the cultural sector can play a major role in creating and sustaining cohesive communities in Northumberland. Our parks, sports venues, libraries and arts centres, museums and theatres are often the only places where communities come together and share experiences.

A vibrant local cultural scene is an effective measure of a passionate, well-functioning community. As a sector we deliver many projects which create spaces for communities to explore themes around identity, shared memories, their local history and shaping the places they want to live in. These can be a real catalyst for social change and tackling issues like climate change, social exclusion or community safety. Giving young people access to high quality cultural experiences, beyond a formal education setting will cultivate confidence and social skills that benefit them and their communities throughout their lives.

## **5. Key Drivers**

This strategy highlights key 'drivers' to be acknowledged by the sector which will either impact positively or negatively on the numbers of people participating in culture, their consideration in strategic planning can help encourage agility and promote relevant, timely investment of resource.

### **The Recession**

The United Kingdom has been feeling the effects of the toughest economic conditions in decades, which has resulted in central and local government stepping up widespread efficiency programmes. During the 12 month period leading to June 2009 an extra 720,000 people were registered unemployed with a prediction of a further 750,000 by mid 2010. Cultural institutions and organisations are facing reductions in resource allocation and changes in consumer behaviour.

It is essential that the cultural sector responds – the role of culture will become increasingly important as the recession spreads from businesses into communities with the potential of long term social problems blighting communities once the recession ends. The sector must share intelligence, collaborate and look to innovate - creating programmes which have clear objectives tailored to local issues focussing on social impact and recovery.

The contribution of culture to providing training and employment opportunities, supporting businesses and bringing in new visitors must be acknowledged and

understood as recovery strategies are developed and implemented. It is important that the sector understands the local economy, the changing needs of businesses, capital development and the impact on demand for services.

### **Digital Access**

Digital media are now essential elements of modern life. This means that the cultural sector must shift its thinking away from the use of digital technology as an 'extra service' or 'add on' which might be offered and instead recognise that the internet is part of the core offering that people expect to find. People, businesses and organisations will increasingly need the capabilities and skills to flourish in the digital economy and participate in digital society.

Benefits to the public are clear – access to new cultural content to inform, educate and entertain or for the more inventive, the opportunity to engage, re-interpret and create. For businesses - making cultural assets more digitally accessible should create increased opportunities for the creative economy. For cultural institutions it provides the chance to engage with new partners, experiment with new business models and ways of working.

### **Climate Change**

As a result of global warming Northumberland's climate is changing. Over recent years there has been an increasing number of extensive rainfall and flooding events. By 2050 it is predicted that there will be a slight reduction in the amount of rainfall, but there will be increased seasonality with more rain falling in the winter months. Average daily temperatures can expect to increase by 1.7°C to 1.8°C and it is predicted that average sea levels will rise by around 0.3 metres along the Northumberland coast. This brings both opportunities and challenges and culture can play its part in mitigating the effects of climate change, communicating climate change as well as taking advantage of new economic opportunities.

### **International Competition**

The cultural sector in Northumberland must have a clear understanding of the opportunities and impacts arising as the United Kingdom prepare to host the 2012 Olympic Games, the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the 2015 Rugby World Cup. Such global competition undoubtedly stimulates participation and previously dormant interest however the economic, social and cultural impacts can be significant. The challenge to Northumberland is to realise these benefits by creatively responding to national programmes, demonstrating the relevance of Olympic and Commonwealth values to our diverse communities and ensuring the County is a destination of choice for international visitors.

## **6. Developing the Strategy**

This draft strategy has been produced following the involvement of and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. The process has been led by the Culture and Tourism Board of the Northumberland Strategic Partnership (NSP). A draft policy discussion paper 'Towards a Northumberland Cultural Strategy' was produced in November 2009 and this formed the basis of a stakeholder consultation workshop attended by a wide variety of local, county and regional organisations from cultural and other sectors. The paper was circulated to a broad range of bodies including cultural organisations, the VCS and parish councils, and was published on the

council's website. A number of comments were received and these have informed the production of the draft strategy.

An initial equality impact assessment has been undertaken and work commissioned by the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership relating to the engagement and empowerment of young people, disabled people and black and minority ethnic communities has also been taken into consideration. This draft strategy will now be subject to wide consultation before producing a revised version in Spring 2011.

## 7. The Vision

If Culture is to make a difference we must ensure that conditions are right for the sector to flourish and that appropriate cultural partnerships, infrastructure and resources are in place. The action plan resulting from this Cultural Strategy balances the needs of the sector with the huge opportunities for people to participate in inspirational cultural activities. We know this can have a transformational, but sustainable impact on Northumberland's wider economic, wellbeing and social aspirations.

Because culture influences all aspects of life, our long term vision for culture in the county mirrors the 25 year vision set out within the SCS. Examples of the way in which culture helps to deliver against the specific priority areas of the Sustainable Community Strategy are illustrated below:

	Place shaping	<p>Culture can increasingly help to build a place for now and the future by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encouraging sensitive use of our countryside and coastline whilst enhancing biodiversity</li> <li>• creatively engaging people in the issues related to climate change</li> <li>• articulating community aspiration into the town and neighbourhood planning</li> </ul>
	Stronger communities	<p>Culture can increasingly help to build a place where you have a voice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing diverse opportunities for volunteering</li> <li>• the provision of cultural opportunity tailored to meet the needs of hard to reach groups</li> <li>• celebrating traditions and values cultivating a strong sense of community identity and local pride</li> </ul>
SCS Vision	Economic prosperity	<p>Culture can increasingly help to build a place for creativity and enterprise by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing a focus for regeneration in post industrial areas</li> <li>• promoting the use of design to offer creative business solutions and new employment opportunities</li> <li>• building on distinctiveness to further develop the tourism offer and promote produce beyond the region</li> </ul>

	Health, care and well being	Culture can increasingly help to build a place to be happy and healthy by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing opportunities to participate in activities which help to improve physical and mental health</li> <li>• providing opportunity for older people to share their heritage and encourage involvement in local activities</li> <li>• improving satisfaction levels with the area as a place to live and work</li> </ul>
	Families and children	Culture can help build a place where every family matters by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping to raise performance and educational attainment</li> <li>• Promoting positive lifestyle choices through opportunities to participate</li> </ul> Reducing out migration by creating stimulating environments and vibrant communities

Appendix 1 details the cultural strategy's objectives and priorities linked to the sustainable community strategy themes.

### Our vision is that:

***Culture is at the heart of all that we do, bringing a rich and meaningful quality of life for people in Northumberland***

### What we want to achieve:

- Increasing **participation** in cultural activity
- Enhancing cultural **opportunity**
- Enriching residents' **quality of life** through access to culture
- Promoting a **sustainable infrastructure** for cultural activity within the county

### Our Objectives

1. To become a premier rural destination in the UK; meeting the needs and expectations of the visitor, whilst developing opportunities for and enhancing the county's businesses, communities, culture and environment.
2. To support the supply and stimulate the demand for the product of creative industries across the region and beyond.
3. To encourage a greater use of creative approaches in the enterprise culture of the county.
4. To facilitate opportunities for learning and skills development through cultural activities and facilities.
5. To host and develop high quality festivals and events, which showcase our distinctiveness, nurture talent and encourage creativity.

6. To increase contact with the arts regardless of circumstance by putting the needs of audiences and communities at the heart of arts activity.
7. To increase the numbers of people volunteering in culture within their community.
8. To maintain and develop a network of high quality, accessible venues and facilities to enable all communities to enjoy cultural activity.
9. To maximise the potential of heritage to contribute to place shaping and support the visitor economy whilst encouraging local people to have a sense of pride, involvement and ownership.
10. To ensure the provision of a rich diversity of parks and green spaces, which make a positive contribution to the regeneration, sustainable development and quality of life.
11. To provide distinctive and inspiring public buildings and spaces across Northumberland through quality public art and design.
12. To develop and coordinate a network of high quality, accessible, safe, healthy and creative play opportunities and spaces which give children and young people the chance to learn, have fun and feel inspired.
13. To work collaboratively in order to develop opportunities and a culture where playing more sport and leading an active lifestyle is the choice of more people in Northumberland.
14. To maintain and develop the cultural infrastructure of the County, enabling culture to flourish.

The cultural strategy is divided into the themes featured within the content framework for the Sustainable Community Strategy, together with an additional theme concerning cultural infrastructure. The final version of this strategy will reflect the agreed themes of the Community Strategy, which is currently out to consultation.

## **8. Strategic Themes**

### **8.1 Economic Prosperity**

All aspects of culture contribute to the economic prosperity of Northumberland. As well as the more obvious contribution of tourism and the creative industries highlighted below, culture contributes to the attractiveness of the county as a place in which to live and work. Decisions to relocate and retain businesses are influenced by the availability of accessible and high quality culture and leisure opportunities and facilities such as arts centres, cycling and walks networks, leisure centres, outdoor activities – not least because they help to attract and keep good staff.

As well as specific tourism businesses, the culture and leisure industries are significant employers in the County, for example through leisure centres, outdoor activity providers, museums, associated retail businesses and the catering/hospitality sector. They have improving career structures, including a growing number of apprenticeship programmes.

Museums, archives and libraries play a key role in education and life long learning which supports both formal and informal learning. Libraries also provide access to information and IT facilities for those seeking work, as well as providing resources to contribute to improving knowledge, skills and workforce development.

## **Tourism**

### **Objective:**

**To become a premier rural destination in the UK; meeting the needs and expectations of the visitor, whilst developing opportunities for and enhancing the county's businesses, communities, culture and environment.**

The Visitor Economy is one of Northumberland's most important economic sectors. An independent assessment<sup>1</sup> has concluded that in 2008 approximately 10,737 jobs were supported by direct tourist expenditure in the county, and a further 2,218 jobs were supported by indirect revenue from tourism. Businesses which benefit from tourism expenditure include accommodation and attractions, but what is not often appreciated is that most money is spent on food and drink, retail and other services.

The total contribution of tourism to the Northumberland economy in 2008 was £650 million. In 2007 it is estimated tourism accounted for 11.8% of employment in Northumberland – placing tourism in the top three of employment sectors. The Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP) is the strategic document which guides the development of tourism in Northumberland and this is set within the context of the Draft North East England Visitor Economy Strategy.

Businesses and public sector partners are united in their belief that developing the visitor economy is one of Northumberland's best possible opportunities for future economic growth and job creation. They are equally united in their belief that Northumberland has a unique visitor offer that provides an ideal platform for success. The benefits of achieving a flourishing visitor economy extend into improving the quality of life for our residents too. The arts, events, heritage attractions, gardens, walks, restaurants and shops –many of our best cultural attractions and activities are only viable because of the money that visitors spend in them.

Only a few years ago The Alnwick Garden did not exist, proving that focussed investment into key attractions can be a real catalyst for growth. It is widely considered that Hadrian's Wall, one of the region's strongest 'brands', and Kielder Water and Forest Park have yet to reach their full potential. The return of the Lindisfarne Gospels to the region in 2013 will put the spotlight on our magnificent Christian heritage and this is also the year of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Flodden. Northumberland is well placed to take advantage of the regional strategy's 'attract and disperse' approach.

Northumberland's towns, in particular Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed, have the potential to add significantly to the depth of offer alongside key attractions, and during the lifetime of this strategy we have an opportunity to take advantage of the National Trust's purchase of Seaton Delaval Hall in South East Northumberland.

In spite of the strong performance of the visitor economy in recent years, a number of challenges remain. One of the biggest problems is that visits remain **highly**

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<sup>1</sup> The STEAM report 2008

**seasonal**, with the summer period (July to September) accounting for over a third of all tourist days. This leads to low status for many jobs, a lack of good training opportunities for staff in the industry, difficult cash flow problems for businesses and an inability to attract significant inward investment, compared to elsewhere in the region.

A further problem identified by surveys is that many visitors are relatively disappointed with our food and retail offer, compared to other similar areas of the country. Visitor surveys clearly demonstrate that demand for locally distinctive gifts, souvenirs and other retail items outstrips availability. Opportunity exists to fill this gap and retain more spend locally.

Northumberland's businesses perform exceptionally well in national league tables of award winners. However there is still some inconsistency in product quality and in service in the hospitality industry. There is also a need for more hotels able to cater for groups. In addition, whilst improving, the county is still behind competitor destinations when measured against indicators of modern business practice such as use of the internet.

Northumberland's natural and built environment is at the core of the county's identity. The development of tourism and the attraction of increased numbers of visitors must therefore be balanced with the protection of the county's natural and built resources. The outstanding environment provides an opportunity to focus more on green, wildlife and eco tourism, thus helping the climate change agenda. Northumberland's distinctiveness, both in terms of the place and its people features strongly in the recent work on branding, which has the potential to engender pride and present a powerful positive image of Northumberland to the outside world.

#### **Priority One**

To increase visitor spend in Northumberland.

#### **Priority Two**

To derive maximum benefit from tourism across Northumberland.

#### **Priority Three**

To implement the Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP).

Further detailed priorities and actions are contained within the ATMaP.

### **Creative Industries**

#### **Objective**

**To support the supply and stimulate the demand for the product of creative industries across the region and beyond.**

Although not a large employer in the county, the Creative Industries sector has increased by 10% more than the national average every year for the last ten years. A particularly strong part of the sector in Northumberland is crafts, with 27% of the region's specialist individual crafts persons being located in Northumberland, as listed in the Crafts Council's directory. Arts businesses are another part of the sector important to the county's economy. Other types of creative industry business (advertising, design and brand communication, interactive leisure software, TV, radio and film) which account for 79% of the sector's turnover in the region tend not to be

located in Northumberland. According to a recent paper 'Investing in creative industries – a guide for local authorities', certain parts of Northumberland have a higher than average share of employment in architecture, art and antiques, music, performing arts and publishing compared to the share of employment across Great Britain.

The 1,000 people employed in Creative Industries in Northumberland represents one fifth of those employed in the sector in the North East. Whilst the North East is increasingly recognised as a vibrant and creative region, supported by an enviable cultural infrastructure and a growing and competitive creative economy, the sector is fragmented and dominated by SMEs, many of which are micro or sole-trader businesses. The potential impact of external economic factors may therefore be significant.

Less tangible than direct economic benefit but of key importance is the Creative Industries sector's contribution to Northumberland's sense of distinctiveness and 'place' and to the tourism offer in particular. Northumberland Tourism is currently working with the arts and crafts sector to stimulate demand for creative short breaks.

Research shows that many of the creative industries tend to cluster in close proximity to firms in similar sectors. While the rural nature of the county would suggest that the common intervention elsewhere across the country of managed workspaces will not be as effective in Northumberland, there is still an opportunity to enable and support clusters or managed retail spaces (both tangible and virtual) as well as seeking to stimulate demand for local product. Coupled with appropriate training these interventions should support the sector in order to increase its contribution to the local economy and maintain a vibrant arts and creative industries community.

#### **Priority One**

To enable and support clustering of businesses or managed retail spaces.

#### **Priority Two**

To stimulate the demand for local product.

### **Creativity**

#### **Objective**

**To encourage a greater use of creative approaches in the enterprise culture of the County.**

There are strong links between creativity and enterprise. Creative activities are deeply embedded in the economy and there are a significant number of creative jobs outside the creative industries sector. Research suggests that creative approaches are 25% more likely to stimulate product innovation and thereby increase wealth generation.

In an enterprise environment creativity can be seen as quite intangible and developing an understanding of the benefits it brings can be challenging. The Creative Partnerships initiative has shown the wider benefits that creativity can bring within the school environment.

There is an opportunity to work with education, enterprise and regeneration partners so that creative approaches become an inherent part of enterprise activity.

### **Priority One**

Work with partners to include creative approaches in enterprise activities and support.

## **Learning, Training and Skills Development**

### **Objective**

**To facilitate opportunities for learning and skills development through cultural activities and facilities.**

All aspects of culture contribute to the economic prosperity of Northumberland. As well as specific tourism businesses, the culture and leisure industries are significant employers in the County, for example through leisure centres, outdoor activity providers, museums, theatres, associated retail businesses and the catering/hospitality sector. They have improving career structures, including a growing number of apprenticeship programmes. They employ large numbers of young people as seasonal/casual employees to meet seasonal and demand fluctuations, and are a valuable early source of work experience. They also offer a route into work or back into work through volunteering, helping to develop self esteem, confidence and work-related skills. Recent projects such as the Personal Best programme and the Cultural Volunteering Pilot have sought to develop this strength of the leisure and cultural industries.

Museums, archives and libraries play a key role in education and life long learning which supports both formal and informal learning. Reader development and literacy programmes offered by libraries support literacy development across all age groups and contribute towards improving basic skills required for employment, as well as contributing to wellbeing. Libraries also provide access to information and IT facilities for those seeking work, as well as providing resources to contribute to improving knowledge, skills and workforce development. There is an opportunity for libraries to work more closely with other public service providers to offer a more integrated information and advice service for the public.

Many cultural organisations report that development and activity can be hampered by lack of trained and qualified people (whether voluntary or paid) to lead and organise activity. This can be a confusing and fragmented area and the role of schools, colleges, voluntary organisations and employers in providing training needs to be developed and encouraged

A key role for the sector and in particular libraries is the support provided to small business through advice and information, which, given the economic climate, is essential if these fledging businesses are to play an active role in their contribution to the overall economic prosperity of the county.

### **Priority One**

Support the provision of cultural training and development opportunities.

### **Priority Two**

Improve the availability and tailoring of information and advice to support learning and access to employment opportunities, through better integration of public services.

## Priority Three

Develop a strategy for libraries to ensure that libraries are at the heart of communities, providing opportunities to learn, obtain information, make transactions and access employment opportunities.

## Festivals and Events

### Objective

**To host and develop high quality festivals and events, which showcase our distinctiveness, nurture talent and encourage creativity.**

Northumberland has many festivals and events across all cultural genres delivered by statutory bodies, private promoters and voluntary organisations. The majority of festivals and events are aimed at a local and regional audience with fewer having a primary market of out of region and visiting audiences.

The role of festivals and events as positive economic and social drivers is increasingly recognised across the world and within the UK. In the North East this has sparked significant financial and social investment by a wide range of organisations including One North East, Arts Council England North East and the Northern Rock Foundation. The Olympics and Paralympics in 2012 will provide inspiration to old and young alike and the North East need to make the most of this opportunity.

Festivals and events in Northumberland create the colour and cultural shape of the county through various celebrations of its heritage and landscape, this provides great opportunities for people to participate, learn and absorb themselves in a variety of cultural activity. Northumberland has worked well and benefited from strong partnership working with regional partners over the past five years, and wishes to continue to play a part in hosting major festivals and events that benefit from Northumberland's unique landscape and heritage. The provision and support of quality events and festivals in Northumberland can generate an array of impacts including:

- showcasing the county as a great place to live, work and visit and invest
- showcasing the cultural diversity and heritage of the county's communities
- highlighting the inventiveness, passion and creativity of the cultural sector and its partners
- stimulating community cohesion and developing aspiration amongst residents, members and policy makers
- increasing cultural participation and audience development amongst traditionally hard to reach groups
- contributing to local pride and enthusiasm
- providing learning and skill development opportunities
- attracting visitors to the county and their associated expenditure
- creating and enhancing a positive image and reputation for the county
- promoting increased business activity both in the private and community sectors

Over the past five years there have been a number of mechanisms in Northumberland to assist the infrastructure of festivals and events throughout the

county. With the new regional development framework for major festivals and events, the refreshed content framework for the Sustainable Community Strategy and the current funding climate, a re-examination of the strategic way forward for events in the county is necessary.

### **Priority One**

To develop and implement a five year Northumberland festivals and events strategy.

### **Priority Two**

To ensure festivals and events organisers have access to appropriate support, guidance and networking opportunities.

## **8.2. Stronger Communities**

Engagement in cultural activities can make significant contributions to society as a whole. Culture can be seen as the 'glue' that holds communities together...it is about a community's overall quality of life. Culture has a very powerful role in raising quality of life in Northumberland and plays a unique and vital part in supporting social cohesion and stronger communities.

Culture forges citizenship by building upon the principle of everyone pulling together, as engagement is not reliant upon age, race, gender, sexuality or social standing individuals feel part of their local community. This in turn promotes civic pride and creates positive images and perceptions about living in a place or within a community. As this integration spreads, the propensity to resort to criminal activity or to display anti social behaviour recedes.

At a more personal level, participating in cultural activities brings enjoyment and confidence helping people stay healthy, both physically and mentally. As self esteem grows so does desire to expand and develop talents and skills – this can lead to better or new opportunities to secure employment or start a new business.

## **The Arts**

### **Objective**

**To increase contact with the arts regardless of circumstance by putting the needs of audiences and communities at the heart of arts activity.**

The 'arts' encompasses a broad range of activities – music, drama, dance, visual arts (painting, sculpting, etc.), film, literature and digital/web based art. Engagement is also broad – professional production, community and amateur work, audience and visitor appreciation, community group and individual participation.

Across Northumberland engagement with the arts is a vital part of people's cultural experience – enriching their personal lives and contributing to community cohesion through shared activities and a sense of place. Most importantly, the purpose of art is to challenge views, perceptions and prejudices – both personal and social – and to make people think.

As well as having an intrinsic value the arts contribute to the wider economic and social agendas. These include:

- creating employment through professional activity – producing artists and companies, venues e.g. theatres & galleries, teaching and workshop provision, retail activities supporting sustainable communities – contributing to the activity programmes at local community halls, developing the voluntary sector, supporting local identity and stimulating inward investment, contributing to a rich quality of life which relates to residential location decisions and to those of industry, particularly the newer footloose, high tech creative businesses that are a growth sector,
- supporting the tourism offer – festivals, public art programmes, open studios and the regular provision of venues,
- helping to create a healthier population -this can take the form of direct physical activity e.g. dance classes or more generally to a sense of well-being,
- contributing to educational attainment- creativity can be a key to learning, and is increasingly seen as a way to improve standards, specifically at specialist performing arts status schools. Artists' interventions can have long term benefits e.g. music training for under 5's has been shown to increase mathematics performance in first schools and the arts can develop creative minds for the future prosperity of Northumberland. Whether at work or play the ability to address & solve new problems rather than acquire old knowledge is at the heart of our future needs and aspirations.

Access to the arts varies across Northumberland. The scattered population in rural areas and socio-economic deprivation in the south-east both create access challenges. There are a small number of dedicated arts buildings across the county and their geographical location has evolved through local initiatives rather than sub-regional strategy. Only a small proportion of performance art programmed by venues and other agencies is produced within the county. Not only does this limit the growth of the sector but it also means that substantial arts funding is effectively going outside the county. Whilst we should aspire to see the best of national and international work this should be alongside rather than instead of home-grown talent. There is an opportunity for greater collaboration and networking between arts organisations and between arts organisations and other sectors. In particular there is a need for joined up thinking between venues, producing companies and the education sector if the full potential of our young people is to be realised.

### **Priority One**

To develop a strategic approach to arts provision and access to opportunity through a hierarchy of provision from specialist venues to community halls and by identifying and meeting geographical gaps and specific community needs.

### **Priority Two**

To stimulate the local production and distribution of art, through policy development and support structures for artists, companies and venues.

### **Priority Three**

To develop networking and collaboration to produce economies of scale, county identity, access to new funding, inter-agency projects and a “bigger voice” for the arts sector.

## **Cultural Volunteering**

### **Objective**

**To increase the number of people volunteering in culture within their community.**

There is a very strong involvement of volunteers and the voluntary and community sector in culture in Northumberland. Many of the major tourist attractions including the Alnwick Garden, Woodhorn, Wallington Hall, much of Hadrian's Wall, the coast and Farne Islands are managed by charities or voluntary organisations with a combination of voluntary and paid staff. 40% of our voluntary organisations see arts, music, sport and recreation as their main activity. The rich and varied range of events in Northumberland owes much to volunteers and voluntary organisations – from huge events such as the Northumberland County Show to town and village fetes, music festivals, band nights, food fairs and markets. In sport, music, drama, arts and craft there are thousands of Northumbrians engaged in organising, developing and making. Volunteers and volunteering help strengthen their local community, contribute to a sense of place, improve people's mental and physical health and improve people's quality of life. As well as organising activities, cultural volunteers can be producing something to share with others, eg performing at a gig, making work for an exhibition or a piece of theatre. There are many ways for people to be involved and gain skills.

Some services such as the housebound library service are entirely delivered through the valued support of volunteers, providing some 2000 plus hours a year of time to vulnerable and dependent people in the community.

The majority of cultural volunteering in Northumberland is done by the 50+ age group. Already 24.9% of our local adults give up their time to help, with, for example, 14,000 people volunteering for at least an hour a week in sport. However, many cultural organisations want to involve more young people, and young people will contribute when there is the opportunity. If we can increase the involvement of young people we will also strengthen our cultural organisations. Can we enable cultural organisations to make better use of existing volunteer support and voluntary sector support bodies, while ensuring that that support is relevant to their needs? There seems to be an opportunity for the volunteer support sector and the cultural sector to work together more closely to develop volunteering opportunities. There is also a need to ensure that employers, training agencies and job centres are aware of the value of cultural volunteering.

### **Priority One**

To shape cultural volunteering activities to suit the needs of young people in a way that enables them to get progressively more involved and develop an enterprising attitude.

### **Priority Two**

To support cultural organisations to develop cultural volunteering opportunities.

### **Priority Three**

To encourage people from varied backgrounds to volunteer.

## Venues and Facilities

### Objective

**To maintain and develop a network of high quality, accessible venues and facilities to enable all communities to enjoy cultural activity.**

Northumberland has many venues and sites for cultural activity, which vary substantially in scale, quality, accessibility and (a growing current concern) financial sustainability. We do not have many specialist venues or facilities because of the nature of our communities, where there is a long history of miners welfares, community centres and church, school and village halls providing the venue for music, drama, sport, arts and crafts, and social activities (not to mention the leek show). Northumberland has however some specialist indoor facilities and venues such as swimming pools, theatres and the “heritage” venues, and has also the huge resource of the natural assets of coast and countryside, which are generally thought to be underused. Perhaps surprisingly, there is no universal clamour for more, bigger and better facilities and venues; although there is certainly some demand for specific facilities in specific places.

With regard to sport, proposed improvements are identified in the draft Northumberland Sports Facilities strategy. The Building Schools for the Future programme, if continued, offers opportunities for schools to develop high quality venues for joint school and community use. Voluntary and community groups are important providers and managers of venues for cultural activity, and may need to be supported and encouraged, as village halls are through development networks. The planning system can play an important role in ensuring funding of community venues and facilities through Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy and in encouraging development of community facilities through its policy framework. The network of community halls and community open spaces (parks, play areas, sports fields) is a vital asset in the County.

Recurring themes from the consultation and discussions on this strategy in relation to venues and facilities are:

- The need to continue to be constructive and adaptable with what we already have – recognising that our generally small communities (both urban and rural) need to use existing venues in new ways to develop activities, whether it is an art exhibition in a heritage attraction or a community activity in a school.
- That facilities developed for tourism can have a substantial local community cultural benefit and vice versa.
- That we have world class natural assets and need to develop their use for local people and visitors whilst maintaining their quality
- That both capital and revenue funding from any source is likely to be limited over the next few years, which will make new developments difficult and may threaten the continued existence and/or the quality of existing venues. We will need to work hard to maintain what we already have. We will also need to be highly creative in bringing forward and generating funding for new developments, crossing boundaries between the voluntary and community, private and public sectors in innovative ways to maximize community benefit

### **Priority One**

To develop the use of school sites as community venues by sharing good practice, providing guidance, and ensuring that any development of school sites is designed to maximise sustainable community use.

### **Priority Two**

To use the planning process to ensure that community cultural benefit is maximised in any development.

### **Priority Three**

To work across the voluntary and community, private and public sectors to implement the Northumberland Sports Facilities strategy.

## **8.3. Place shaping**

Culture, leisure and tourism have a strong role to play in the place shaping agenda. Locally distinctive places, heritage and environments are a very important part of both the resident and the tourism offer, and are particularly of interest to Northumberland's target visitor markets.

### **Heritage**

#### **Objective**

**To maximise the potential of heritage to contribute to place shaping and support the visitor economy whilst encouraging local people to have a sense of pride, involvement and ownership.**

Northumberland has an outstanding heritage offer and is renowned throughout the world for its built and natural heritage assets including Neolithic rock art and prehistoric hill forts, the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site, historic castles, monuments and houses, museums and archives, AONB's and the National Park. Significant investment, from both the public and private sector, has been made at a number of these sites with great success. The National Trust has recently invested in improvements at Craggside and the acquisition of Vanbrugh's majestic Seaton Delaval Hall, English Heritage is also a major stakeholder with 5 of the 12 most visited attractions in the county. Alnwick Castle and Gardens continue to flourish attracting in excess of 210,000 visitors during 2009.

Heritage presents opportunities for communities to come together with a common purpose to enhance and preserve attractions. Heritage is a key driver for continued growth in the tourism economy of Northumberland representing 90% of all attractions in the County, these assets not only provide reasons to visit, they also lengthen stays, increase spend and can be significant employers. Heritage can be used as a driver for physical regeneration and projects such as Woodhorn, Blyth Battery and Newbiggin are undoubtedly contributing to the regeneration of South East Northumberland and the rich heritage of Berwick upon Tweed will be intrinsic to the town's regeneration. For local people heritage attractions create shared spaces to celebrate local culture, history and tradition. Access to heritage can offer a range of opportunities targeted at diverse groups or hard to reach groups, for example positive activities engaging young people and helping to create common ground when working with migrant communities. Heritage attractions deliver formal and informal education playing a major role in learning outside of the classroom with curriculum linked visits and special projects. Adult learning, family and local history research and

outreach programmes enable people to learn new skills and help create a sense of place. Heritage attractions, large and small, offer many opportunities for volunteering which contribute to the development of new skills and experience which can provide a route into employment. Festivals and events provide opportunities to recognise and celebrate the County's heritage, the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Flodden will be a platform to stimulate widespread engagement.

The protection and enhancement of the County's historic building and monuments is essential to ensure that these assets are available for future generations to enjoy. LAA performance targets have been exceeded in terms of improvements in the condition of Northumberland's Heritage at Risk and English Heritage is supporting some of the work to improve condition. There is however more to do and the LAA target details the current challenge of Heritage at Risk (as well as providing a mechanism to tackle it).

It is important to recognise that the economic and social contribution of the sector is not just about visits to historic buildings and monuments; it is also about access to excellent museums and galleries, immersion into the county's rich industrial and maritime heritage and experiencing our stunning landscapes, parks and wildlife sites. It is also vital to recognise the contribution of local groups to the heritage offer, some maybe self sufficient, others though enthusiastic and talent rich will lack capacity and direction, therefore it is essential that appropriate support is available. There is a need to maximise the value of investment made in heritage attractions over the past five years by encouraging growth, promoting sustainability and fostering collaboration. Elsewhere there must be encouragement to the further development of existing attractions such as Hadrian's Wall, Hexham Abbey and Berwick Barracks. Opportunities should be maximised to bring investment to widen the benefits of heritage attractions to specific areas of need within the county for example young people, adult learners and tackling worklessness.

### **Priority One**

To sustain and enhance Northumberland's existing heritage attractions and assets.

### **Priority Two**

To support the development of new projects and initiatives.

### **Priority Three**

To encourage and nurture broad and inclusive community engagement in heritage to promote sustainable opportunity and provision.

## **Parks and green spaces**

### **Objective**

**To ensure the provision of a rich diversity of parks and green spaces, which make a positive contribution to regeneration, sustainable development and quality of life.**

It is recognised that the provision of good quality green spaces can make a significant contribution to regeneration and renewal projects and greatly increase the image of a town or neighbourhood. The term 'green space' covers a range of managed and more natural spaces which are publicly accessible. Quality parks and green space can have significant economic benefits; they can contribute to the raising of property values, create quality townscapes therefore building community and business confidence. They are also an integral part of the

wider public space network and as much a part of the urban fabric as its buildings. They bring many benefits that make places more liveable and sustainable and enrich the quality of peoples' lives and communities. Parks form part of the life experience of most individuals in our communities, from babies in prams, through children's play, young people's use as free and accessible space, to adults discovering their value for health and relaxation. They are regarded as an essential ingredient in establishing a 'sense of place' which is vital to the lifting of community spirit as well as being an attraction for visitors. Parks and green spaces encourage education and lifelong learning by providing a unique resource for learning about the natural world and the environment.

We obviously need to safeguard these sites and ensure that we manage them sensitively. However, to truly achieve this, we need to value all our open spaces and the links between them. Individually, they serve different purposes and accommodate different uses, but collectively they represent a playground for residents, and visitors, to enjoy, provided their vulnerability is understood and their inter-connectivity maximised. The adoption of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, through the LDF process, will provide strategic direction for the development of parks and green spaces.

#### **Priority One**

To increase use of parks and green spaces by all sectors of the community for educational, health and recreational purposes.

#### **Priority Two**

To encourage community engagement and involvement in parks and green spaces.

### **Public Art and Design**

#### **Objective:**

#### **To provide distinctive and inspiring public buildings and spaces across Northumberland through quality public art and design.**

The involvement of artists in town and neighbourhood planning can work alongside architects and developers to introduce creative design solutions and spaces which relate meaningfully to their heritage and surrounding environments, providing distinctive and better places for people to live, work and thrive in.

Inspire Northumberland (the public art & design programme) works across the county identifying opportunities where artists and designers can bring innovative perspectives within regeneration, business, heritage, tourism, education and environmental projects. Examples include:

- Sean Henry's *Couple* sculpture in Newbiggin Bay, which was the cultural focus of a sea defence and beach replenishment scheme that delivered international impact, attracting visitors and involving hundreds of local people in an ambitious science and poetry programme.
- Simon Watkinson's *Hyperscope*; an architectural lighting sculpture, centre piece to the transformation of Blyth Market Place and a stimulus for vibrant festivals and events.

- Artists creating design guides in Seahouses and influencing public realm strategies in Berwick, Wooler and Ashington.
- *Experiments in Fashion*; fashion design with international designer Wayne Hemingway - design projects that provide creative engagement with young people across Northumberland.

Quality design in our buildings, public realm and open spaces has a positive effect on the well-being and mental health of people. In a recent survey 85% of people polled stated that the quality of public space has a direct impact upon their lives and the way they feel<sup>2</sup>. Well-designed, managed and maintained places foster civic pride and a sense of identity, encourage sustainable living, contribute to improving physical and mental health, reduce opportunities for crime and promote equality and community cohesion.

Regardless of who pays for or profits from development, everyone has the right to live, work and learn in well-designed buildings, places and spaces that inspire and lift the spirits as well as being functional and fit for purpose. Good design is in the public interest.

To rise to the challenge of climate change, sustainability and inclusive places we need to embrace good practice and engage with the leading experts so that place-shaping in Northumberland is the best in the country. Our schools, houses and neighbourhoods, green spaces and public realm should be exemplar in their design and impact on quality of life.

Culture and investment in creative activity can provide a means of liberating community voices and allowing community groups to look afresh at the powerful contribution they can make to the shaping of a place.

#### **Priority One**

To promote the benefits of involving artists in the design process of our major capital projects.

#### **Priority Two**

To guide collaboration with artists and the public sector in relation to the public realm and new public buildings in our urban centres and identify opportunities to develop creative and innovative projects in our rural environment.

#### **Priority Three**

To inspire and engage local people through quality art and design experiences and to specifically engage our young people to be aspirational through creative activity.

### **8.4. Families and Children**

Children and young people matter most in terms of our future. Their start in life is crucial to the quality of their adult lives and to the future of our communities.

Participating in cultural activities helps children and young people to learn and grow, developing social and mental skills and building self esteem. Cultural facilities and activities encourage a more active and healthy lifestyle for young people, and provide safe but challenging environments where they can pursue their own interests and realise their potential.

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<sup>2</sup> SEEN & HEARD , DEMOS, Nov 2007

## **Play**

### **Objective:**

**To develop and coordinate a network of high quality, accessible, safe, healthy and creative play opportunities and spaces which give children and young people the chance to learn, have fun and feel inspired.**

Play can be considered from a number of perspectives. It can be seen as an essential component of education, or from the health perspective as a mechanism to promote physical and mental health. Socially it teaches children how to behave with their peers, how to share and work in teams and make their opinions known. It can also be seen as an early form of cultural behaviour which can stimulate a lifelong interest in personal enrichment.

Play allows children to test boundaries and learn about themselves, their peers and the world about them. It fosters independence, self-esteem and children's respect for others as well as offering opportunities for social interaction. It can happen everywhere that imagination leads, including streets, riversides, parks and open spaces, fields and woods, as well as artificially designed play areas.

Those providing opportunities for play need to be aware that risk taking is a fundamental part of the play experience. There has been a tendency in recent years to 'play safe' when considering risks. Whilst risks need to be managed, play facilities should provide a challenging and stimulating environment for children and young people. Big Lottery funding has enabled additional free play opportunities in many parts of the County, there is a challenge to all stakeholders to sustain the quality outcomes of this provision once external funding has ceased. A strategic countywide play partnership is essential to integrate and advocate play whilst coordinating the activity of the established network of local play partnerships. There is a high demand from older children for less traditional activities such as BMX tracks, skateboard facilities and adventure playgrounds. However there is sometimes pressure and resistance by local communities who do not want such activities located close to housing.

### **Priority One**

To ensure a sustainable future for the provision of play opportunities.

### **Priority Two**

To develop a robust play strategy which provides clear and concise guidance but also has the agility to encourage creativity and innovation.

### **Priority Three**

To provide challenging and stimulating environments for children and young people to play which contribute to the quality of the overall public realm.

## **8.5 Health and wellbeing**

The Government has set a demanding agenda nationally for improving well being and reducing health inequalities. Culture contributes greatly to the health agenda, and if further funding is directed towards prevention rather than cure, we are more likely to achieve the aim of moving people towards a more active and healthy lifestyle. Sport and leisure activities provide excellent opportunities to get people more active. Parks also play a key role in contributing to healthy and active lifestyles,

providing opportunities for healthy exercise as well as the general peace of mind resulting from access to pleasant surroundings.

Whilst the arts are featured under 'stronger communities' they also contribute to the health agenda. Dance can provide an opportunity to engage those who may not be interested in more traditional competitive sports and street dance engages sections of the community who might otherwise not be physically active. Participation in arts activities can help to improve mental health, both through the benefits of the activity itself, and through the inclusion promoted through interaction with others. Libraries contribute to health through access to health information and signposting to other services such as bibliotherapy.

## **Active Lifestyles**

### **Objective**

**To work collaboratively in order to develop opportunities and a culture where playing more sport and leading an active lifestyle is the choice of more people in Northumberland.**

Against a backdrop of a sedentary Northumberland, the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games offers Northumberland Care Trust, Northumberland County Council and local partners a unique window of opportunity to encourage more people to be more active. Although over half of local adults take part in sport and active recreation at least once a month, almost 8 out of every 10 people in Northumberland currently don't exercise sufficiently in order to have a positive effect on their health (as measured by the national Active People Survey). The Chief Medical Officer recommends that adults need to participate in a minimum of five 30 minute sessions of moderate to intense physical activity per week and children need to be active for an hour every day. There is a challenging national target for one million people playing more sport and a further million being more active by the time the 2012 Olympics are staged. Northumberland can contribute to this national target through a sustained commitment to attain Local Area Agreement targets for PE and school sport and adult participation.

Increasing the number of people leading an active lifestyle not only makes people feel better, it offers real and tangible health benefits. An estimated 35,000 deaths every year in the UK are directly related to physical inactivity. Two thirds of these deaths are due to cardiovascular disease. This equates to close to 100 deaths a day or one person dying every 15 minutes as a result of inactivity. Northumberland generally has some poor health indicators with the urban south east area and in particular the most deprived wards fairing worse than rural areas. There is also a growing older population for whom an inactive lifestyle can lead to a broader range of health problems including poor mental health and isolation especially but not exclusively in rural areas.

Participating in sport also has educational, economic and social benefits. Latest research from CASE (a joint strategic research initiative led by DCMS) shows that:

- Young people's participation in organised sport improves their numeracy scores, on average, by 8% above that of non-participants
- The participation of underachieving young people in extra-curricular learning activities linked to sport increases their numeracy skills, on average, by 29% above that of non-participants, and their transferable skills by 12-16%

- Sport generates substantial long-term economic value in terms of avoided health costs and improved health-related quality of life, e.g. the total economic value generated by doing sport varies between £11,400 per person (badminton) and £45,800 per person (health and fitness)
- Engagement in sport has a positive and quantifiable effect on a person's perceived wellbeing

The financial cost of inactivity is huge and the Department of Health estimates that on average every Primary Care Trust in the UK bears an annual financial burden of circa £5m. In Northumberland it is estimated to be just over £4m. A better understanding of the need to “invest to save” is necessary and for resources to be targeted in preventing rather than treating poor health.

Doing nothing therefore about changing the culture of Northumberland to get more people active simply isn't an option. The Care Trust, the County Council and all partners and stakeholders need to work together to deliver more and better opportunities for local communities to take up regular exercise and to stick with it.

### **Priority One**

To establish and implement a physical activity plan that will focus on encouraging more people from targeted sectors of the community to walk, run, cycle, dance and swim more often.

### **Priority Two**

To establish strategic collaboration between schools, community clubs and activity providers to ensure young people are more active from an early age and that this transcends into adulthood.

### **Priority Three**

To promote sporting and physical activity opportunities and work with partners to strengthen an infrastructure of vibrant community sports clubs.

## **8.6. Cultural Infrastructure**

### **Objective:**

**To maintain and develop the cultural infrastructure of the County, enabling culture to flourish.**

To realise the ambition of this cultural strategy we need to build on the cultural strengths of the county. The cultural infrastructure of the County needs to be valued and nurtured, encouraged and supported. Through advice and other support the key voluntary sector can continue to grow, whilst continued investment in public sector services will ensure that culture is at the heart of communities.

Cultural opportunities in Northumberland are not provided by any single agency. They are the result of the energy, enthusiasm, commitment, investment and vision of a wide range of public bodies, commercial organisations and voluntary clubs and groups. The Council is one of the leading providers of cultural opportunities, through its leisure centres, playing fields, parks, libraries, sports development and playgrounds. It also provides opportunity to take part in cultural activity through its schools, youth services and community services. Its role is also as an enabler through the provision of grant aid and advice to cultural organisations, and as a

strategic planner that influences and makes decisions on cultural development through the planning process. The council has a key role in ensuring that the maximum benefit is obtained by coordinating the resources, energy and enthusiasm of the many direct and indirect cultural providers in the county.

Quality service is crucial to encourage and maintain participation. Many providers of cultural opportunities are not of a statutory or institutional nature but enthusiastically strive to serve their members, users and communities. The voluntary sector in Northumberland is strong and makes an important contribution to the cultural life of the county. Given the importance of culture to health, crime prevention, life long learning, integrating people within their communities, and providing opportunities for personal development, this investment in culture is not an option, but a necessity.

Maintaining and developing the cultural infrastructure will ensure that the foundations of a thriving cultural County are firmly laid, and provide the springboard for future development, regeneration and investment in Northumberland.

#### **Priority One**

Seek to address identified deficiencies within the cultural infrastructure of the County.

#### **Priority Two**

To support and develop cultural and community organisations which provide cultural opportunities, particularly those in areas of greatest need.

#### **Priority Three**

To promote strong networks of facility and venue providers, to share good practice, develop multiple uses, and maximise opportunities for marketing and promotion.

### **9. Delivery and measurement of the strategy**

This strategy is for Northumberland and its delivery requires the ownership and commitment of all of the partners within the Northumberland Strategic Partnership (NSP). High level priorities have been identified and these will need to be developed into more detailed action plans highlighting responsibilities and timescales for action. In some instances these actions plans are already in preparation or underway – for example the Physical Activity Strategy and the Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP). The final version of the strategy will also contain high level targets and measures to enable progress to be monitored.

## APPENDIX 1

Sustainable Community Strategy Theme	Culture's Role	Objectives	Priorities
Economic Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing a focus for regeneration in post industrial areas</li> <li>• promoting the use of design to offer creative business solutions and new employment opportunities</li> <li>• building on distinctiveness to further develop the tourism offer and promote produce beyond the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To become a premier rural destination in the UK; meeting the needs and expectations of the visitor, whilst developing opportunities for and enhancing the county's businesses, communities, culture and environment.</li> <li>• To support the supply and stimulate the demand for the product of creative industries across the region and beyond</li> <li>• To facilitate opportunities for learning and skills development through cultural activities and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To increase visitor spend in Northumberland.</li> <li>○ To derive maximum benefit from tourism across Northumberland.</li> <li>○ To implement the Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP)</li> <li>○ To enable and support clustering of businesses or managed retail spaces.</li> <li>○ To stimulate the demand for local product.</li> <li>○ Improve the availability and tailoring of information and advice to support learning and access to employment opportunities, through better integration of public services.</li> </ul>
Stronger Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing diverse opportunities for volunteering</li> <li>• the provision of cultural opportunity tailored to meet the needs of hard to reach groups</li> <li>• celebrating traditions and values cultivating a strong sense of community identity and local pride</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To host and develop high quality festivals and events, which showcase our distinctiveness, nurture talent and encourage creativity.</li> <li>• To increase contact with the arts regardless of circumstance by putting the needs of audiences and communities at the heart of arts activity.</li> <li>• To increase the number of people volunteering in culture within their community.</li> <li>• To maintain and develop a network of</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To develop and implement a five year Northumberland festivals and events strategy</li> <li>2) To ensure festivals and events organisers have access to appropriate support, guidance and networking opportunities.</li> <li>3) To develop a strategic approach to arts provision and access to opportunity through a hierarchy of provision from specialist venues to community halls and by identifying and meeting geographical gaps and specific community needs.</li> <li>4) To stimulate the local production and distribution of art, through policy development and support structures for artists, companies and venues.</li> <li>5) To develop networking and collaboration to produce economies of scale, county identity, access to new funding, inter-agency projects and a "bigger voice" for the arts sector.</li> <li>6) To shape cultural volunteering activities to suit the needs of young people in a way that enables them to get progressively more involved and develop an enterprising attitude.</li> <li>7) To support cultural organisations to develop cultural volunteering opportunities.</li> <li>8) To encourage people from varied backgrounds to volunteer.</li> </ol>

		high quality, accessible venues and facilities to enable all communities to enjoy cultural activity	<p>9) To develop the use of school sites as community venues by sharing good practice, providing guidance, and ensuring that any development of school sites is designed to maximise sustainable community use</p> <p>10) To use the planning process to ensure that community cultural benefit is maximised in any development.</p>
Place Shaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encouraging sensitive use of our countryside and coastline whilst enhancing biodiversity</li> <li>creatively engaging people in the issues related to climate change</li> <li>articulating community aspiration into the town and neighbourhood planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maximise the potential of heritage to contribute to place shaping and support the visitor economy whilst encouraging local people to have a sense of pride, involvement and ownership.</li> <li>To ensure the provision of a rich diversity of parks and green spaces, which make a positive contribution to regeneration, sustainable development and quality of life.</li> <li>To provide distinctive and inspiring public buildings and spaces across Northumberland through quality public art and design</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To sustain and enhance Northumberland's existing heritage attractions and asset</li> <li>To support the development of new projects and initiatives</li> <li>To encourage and nurture broad and inclusive community engagement in heritage to promote sustainable opportunity and provision.</li> <li>To increase use of parks and green spaces by all sectors of the community for educational, health and recreational purposes.</li> <li>To encourage community engagement and involvement in parks and green spaces</li> <li>To promote the benefits of involving artists in the design process of our major capital projects.</li> <li>To guide collaboration with artists and the public sector in relation to the public realm and new public buildings in our urban centres and identify opportunities to develop creative and innovative projects in our rural environment</li> <li>To inspire and engage local people through quality art and design experiences and to specifically engage our young people to be aspirational through creative activity</li> </ol>
Families and Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helping to raise performance and educational attainment</li> <li>Promoting positive lifestyle choices through opportunities to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop and coordinate a network of high quality, accessible, safe, healthy and creative play opportunities and spaces which give children and young people the chance to learn, have fun and</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure a sustainable future for the provision of play opportunities</li> <li>To develop a robust play strategy which provides clear and concise guidance but also has the agility to encourage creativity and innovation.</li> <li>To provide challenging and stimulating environments for children and young people to play which contribute to the quality of the overall public realm.</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing out migration by creating stimulating environments and vibrant communities</li> </ul>	feel inspired.	
Health, care and well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing opportunities to participate in activities which help to improve physical and mental health</li> <li>providing opportunity for older people to share their heritage and encourage involvement in local activities</li> <li>improving satisfaction levels with the area as a place to live and work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To work collaboratively in order to develop opportunities and a culture where playing more sport and leading an active lifestyle is the choice of more people in Northumberland.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To establish and implement a physical activity plan that will focus on encouraging more people from targeted sectors of the community to walk, run, cycle, dance and swim more often.</li> <li>To establish strategic collaboration between schools, community clubs and activity providers to ensure young people are more active from an early age and that this transcends into adulthood.</li> <li>To promote sporting and physical activity opportunities and work with partners to strengthen an infrastructure of vibrant community sports clubs.</li> </ol>
Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working in partnership with cultural and non cultural partners to ensure that the county continues to 'punch above its weight'</li> <li>Making best use of scarce resources, delivering through and with VCS bodies</li> <li>Using culture as a focus at local level to encourage joined up working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain and develop the cultural infrastructure of the county, enabling culture to flourish</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To seek to address identified deficiencies within the cultural infrastructure of the county.</li> <li>To support and develop cultural and community organisations which provide cultural opportunities, particularly those in areas of greatest need</li> <li>To promote strong networks of facility and venue providers, to share good practice, develop multiple uses, and maximise opportunities for marketing and promotion</li> </ol>