

West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy 2020-2030

Consultation Draft



Photo credit Alex Harvey-Brown



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



WestBerkshire
C O U N C I L

Contents

1.	Executive Summary	3
	Foreword by Councillor Howard Woollaston	3
	Purpose of the strategy	3
	What we mean by cultural heritage	3
	Vision	3
	Objectives	3
2.	Introduction	5
	Why a cultural heritage strategy?	5
	Purpose of the strategy	5
	Stakeholders working together	5
3.	Vision and objectives	6
	Vision	6
	Objectives	6
	Challenges and opportunities	8
	Delivery and measuring success	8
4.	Governance, reporting and communication	9
	Managing delivery	9
5.	Conclusions	10
	Appendix 1 Strategy Development	12
	How we developed the strategy	12
	Stakeholders we consulted	12
	Building on our success / a strong cultural and heritage offer for residents and visitors	13
	Appendix 2 Baseline: data and research	16
	Alignment with key council strategies	16
	Other plans, strategies and data we consulted	17

1 Executive Summary

Foreword by Councillor Howard Woollaston



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

a range of local culture and heritage organisations to celebrate and promote what we have- and set some objectives to make it even better over the next ten years.

Do please let us know what you think about any aspect of this strategy. You can do so by searching online for West Berkshire Culture and Heritage Strategy 2020-30 survey or by emailing our Culture and Libraries Manager paul.james@westberkshire.gov.uk

Cllr Howard Woollaston, Executive Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture.

Purpose of the strategy

The West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy 2020-30 sets out the ambition and vision of the council and key stakeholders for a strong cultural offer and sector in West Berkshire for the next ten years.

The strategy sets out a strategic vision and actions for West Berkshire- the council and other stakeholder organisations- to promote and develop our cultural heritage as a valuable resource which makes a significant contribution to the economy, improves the health and wellbeing of communities, and is a unique asset in its own right.

The strategy recognises the uniqueness of the area – its rural and urban communities, its heritage, historic buildings and landscape, the richness of the arts in all its forms, its thriving arts and cultural organisations.

As recommended by Arts Council England, the strategy identifies high level strategic objectives to be achieved by the council with key stakeholders working together as a Delivery Board.

They are tasked with developing a Delivery Plan which will set out what will be done, when and how and these actions will be measured against targets and performance indicators.

What we mean by cultural heritage

Our vision is West Berkshire will have a sustainable, resilient and thriving cultural heritage sector that supports creativity and innovation, while bringing significant benefits to the economy and all our communities. West Berkshire has a wealth of excellent cultural and heritage organisations and a unique historic environment. Our strategy aims to build on those strengths and achieve more through partnership working.

Vision

Our vision is West Berkshire will have a sustainable, resilient and thriving cultural heritage sector that supports creativity and innovation, while bringing significant benefits to the economy and all our communities. West Berkshire has a wealth of excellent cultural and heritage organisations and a unique historic environment. Our strategy aims to build on those strengths and achieve more through

Objectives

By 2030 the council and other stakeholders will have developed and delivered actions in 5 key areas

1. Ensure our cultural and heritage organisations thrive and are as sustainable as possible.
2. Contribute to the improvement of the health and well-being of all our residents.
3. Improve access to cultural education, learning and employment.
4. Protect and promote our unique cultural history, heritage and environment.
5. Increase domestic and international tourism to generate income, investment and increase economic resilience.

The council and key stakeholders will work together as a Delivery Board which reports to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Board. They are responsible for developing actions that are specific, achievable and measurable and reporting on progress in meeting the objectives.

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



2 Introduction

Why a cultural heritage strategy?

Culture and heritage are important in their own right.

Taking cultural heritage seriously is to recognise its unique contribution to the richness of West Berkshire as a place to live, work and learn.

Cultural heritage is integral to people's health and wellbeing, increases academic attainment, provides a sense of place and identity, and has a significant, positive impact on the local economy.

A successful strategy recognises that West Berkshire is distinctive, that we have a focused plan, that we have ambition and can work together successfully in partnership to achieve more.

Investing in culture has been shown to have significant and evidenced benefits for tourism (both domestic and international) and the local economy, both in terms of inward investment, and visitor spend. For example, the City of Culture initiatives have clearly brought real and measurable economic improvements and regeneration.

The strategy can help us to develop a clear identity/branding for the area that communicates well with potential visitors and businesses from the UK and far beyond.

The strategy will demonstrate the commitment of all the partners to work together to increase inward investment and maximise the economic benefits.

“Investing in culture has been shown to have significant and evidenced benefits for tourism (both domestic and international) and the local economy”



Purpose of the strategy

The strategy sets out the ambition and vision of the council and key stakeholders for cultural heritage in West Berkshire in 2020-30.

The strategy identifies a number of high-level objectives to be achieved by the council and key stakeholders working together.

The objectives are supported by a Delivery Plan. Some actions have already been developed through stakeholder consultations. Others will be developed by the Delivery Board to ensure that the Delivery Plan is flexible, achievable and responds to change. With the recent pandemic it is even more critical that the Delivery Plan is seen as a dynamic, working document and is subject to review. The ability for the cultural heritage sector to be able to take a short, medium, and long-term view, to plan and respond accordingly, has become even more important.

Stakeholders working together

The strategy recognises that more can be achieved through effective partnership working with key stakeholders in all sectors – culture, heritage, business, community and local government.

West Berkshire has a wealth of excellent cultural and heritage organisations. It also has a framework of strategic and operational partnerships led by the council – for example, The Health and Wellbeing Board. Our strategy aims to build on these strengths and achieve more by embedding culture and heritage in that partnership framework and

strengthening it to ensure delivery of the objectives and actions by setting up a Delivery Board with key stakeholders

3 Vision and objectives

Vision

Our vision is that West Berkshire will have a sustainable, resilient and thriving cultural heritage sector that brings significant benefits to the economy and the health and wellbeing of all our residents. West Berkshire has a wealth of excellent cultural and heritage organisations and a unique historic environment. Our strategy aims to achieve more by supporting creativity and innovation through partnership working.

Objectives

The objectives in the strategy have been developed through consultation and feedback from stakeholders and a review of other relevant plans and strategies – West Berkshire Council, Public Health and regional and national plans,

strategies and data. See above.

West Berkshire Council is the lead partner in developing this strategy and the council contributes to cultural life in the district through the West Berkshire Museum, Shaw House, the library service and countryside services. The archaeology service and Conservation Officers are responsible for providing information and advice on the protection and management of the local authority's heritage assets. West Berkshire Museum collects and preserves objects of cultural importance.

However, most of the richness and variety of local cultural heritage is developed and delivered by a range of independent organisations, venues, festivals and community and voluntary organisations. Throughout the development process it has been clear that effective partnerships between all these stakeholders is key to delivery of the strategy.

By 2030 the council and key stakeholders will have completed actions in 5 key areas:

THEMES	OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Board
Sustainability	Ensure our cultural and heritage organisations thrive and are as sustainable as possible.	Strive to provide increased economic resilience for organisations, small and medium enterprises (SME's) and individuals in the cultural heritage sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase inward investment through joint initiatives and external funding.• Increase and develop joined up working between organisations and effective strategic partnership working.
Health and Wellbeing	Contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of all our residents.	Develop the cultural and heritage sector to meet short, medium, and long-term needs of residents, taking a lifespan approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop strategic partnerships and programmes for those with complex needs, who are vulnerable, and for whom there exists the most barriers to access and participation.• Develop and deliver effective projects and programmes which meet health and wellbeing priorities as identified in council and health service strategic plans.• Increase access to culture and heritage for our rural and urban communities including children and young people.

THEMES	OBJECTIVES	AIMS	ACTIONS To be developed by the Delivery Board
Education and employment	Improve access to cultural education, learning and employment.	Support the education and cultural heritage sector to develop and deliver arts and creative learning opportunities, training, and career progression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote opportunities for apprenticeships and paid internships, through partnerships with local cultural and heritage organisations and businesses.
Heritage and the historic environment	Protect and promote our unique cultural history, heritage and environment.	Protect and promote cultural assets across West Berkshire – historic buildings and landscapes, Areas Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, museum and archaeology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase investment through strategic partnership applications to external funding bodies. For example: the National Lottery Heritage Fund. • Increase volunteering schemes. For example : monitoring of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. • Increase and develop joined up working, including with non-arts/heritage organisations, to engage a wider understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of West Berkshire's historic and cultural assets and landscape.
Economic development	Increase domestic and international tourism to generate income, investment and increase economic resilience.	Promote and raise awareness amongst potential visitors of the wealth and diversity of culture and heritage. For example: historic buildings and landscapes, events and creative industries in the district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships and programmes across the cultural, heritage, landscape and tourism sectors to create experiential tourism opportunities. • Increase public awareness of the wealth and diversity of cultural and heritage activities, events and places across the district. • Develop partnerships to create and promote experiential tourism opportunities and promote these to tourism providers. • Research and seek financial support from external funders / investors to develop tourism.

Challenges and opportunities

Throughout the development of this strategy stakeholders and consultees have raised the following issues:

- The cultural heritage offer in West Berkshire is strong but lacks overall co-ordination in terms of branding and promotion.
- The rural / urban nature of the district means that some have less access to culture and heritage opportunities.
- The benefits of culture for individual wellbeing are well understood but we can do more to maximise those benefits.
- We need to strengthen partnership working to deliver more together.
- Inward investment is needed to increase the sustainability of our cultural heritage organisations, businesses and individual artists/makers.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the cultural heritage sector with many organisations struggling or unable to survive.
- The economic downturn caused by the pandemic has been considerable and presents challenges on a scale not encountered for decades.
- The pandemic has led to many residents re engaging in arts activities and increased recognition of the role cultural heritage has in people's health and wellbeing.
- The pandemic has increased the profile of the cultural heritage sector and its contribution to the economy.

Delivery and measuring success

The council will form a Delivery Board with key stakeholders in the arts, heritage and the tourism economy, who are tasked with

- Developing the Delivery Plan – the projects, actions and resources needed to deliver on the objectives in the strategy.
- To set targets, measure performance and take any remedial action necessary to maintain progress.
- To report on progress to all stakeholders and further develop the strategy in response to wider changes in culture, heritage and the economy.



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

“Most of the richness and variety of local cultural heritage is developed and delivered by a range of independent organisations, venues, festivals and community and voluntary organisations.”

4 Governance, reporting and communication

Managing delivery

BODY	PURPOSE	STAKEHOLDERS / MEMBERS
Cultural Heritage Delivery Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the delivery of the strategy (objectives and actions). Develops the Delivery Plan to ensure it can deliver on the vision and objectives. Listens to / communicates with stakeholders. Reports to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board Liaison with national bodies – Arts Council England, Historic England. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Berkshire Council / elected members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive portfolio member for Public Health and Community Wellbeing The council's Heritage Champion West Berkshire Council / officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture and Library Services Archaeology and countryside services Education Services Public Health Economic development Major arts organisations. Representatives of community organisations Business community / a major employer Others as required to deliver the plan.

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

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

5 Conclusions

Culture and heritage are a significant part of what makes West Berkshire a great place to live, work, invest and visit.

The strategy invites stakeholders in the arts, culture, heritage and tourism to work together to further improve access to the benefits of culture and heritage for all.

The strategy responds to a number of opportunities and issues raised by stakeholders through consultation:

- The cultural heritage offer in West Berkshire is vibrant, diverse and strong and would benefit from a co-ordinated partnership approach to branding and promotion.
- The rural/urban nature of the district means that some people have less access to culture and heritage opportunities and the Delivery Plan will identify projects and initiatives to address that.
- The benefits of culture and heritage for individual and community wellbeing are well known and the Delivery Plan will ensure that action is taken to support existing council, Public Health and NHS plans to improve wellbeing.
- We have a number of effective partnerships in the district and these can be strengthened to ensure that culture and heritage is integrated in strategic decision making.
- Stakeholders can work together to co-ordinate actions which increase inward investment for culture, heritage and tourism.

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected all aspects of life, including culture and heritage. It is proving to be an existential threat to cultural organisations large and small, regionally, nationally and internationally and a clear strategy and plan is needed more than ever.



“Culture and heritage is a significant part of what makes West Berkshire a great place to live, work, invest in and visit. ”





Appendix 1

Strategy development

How we developed the strategy

The strategy has been developed through consultation with a wide range of stakeholders in 2019 and 2020 including:

- Cultural / arts organisations and venues.
- Community arts organisations.
 - Individual artists/makers.
- Small businesses and the digital arts (including gaming developers).
- Business and economic partnerships and forums.
- Teachers and education networks.
- Heritage, history and archaeology groups.
- West Berkshire Council – elected members and service managers including education, culture, museum, archaeology and countryside and economic development services.
- West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Partnership.
- Town and parish councils.
- Arts Council England, Artswork, Historic England, the Environment Agency, Tourism South East

Building on our success / a strong cultural and heritage offer for residents and visitors

West Berkshire already has a wealth of cultural and heritage venues, organisations, events and community organisations including:

- **The Corn Exchange** – a multi-arts cultural organisation and charitable trust. A flagship arts centre for the South East. The Trust manages three arts spaces
 - The Corn Exchange- 400 seat auditorium, 40 seat independent cinema.
 - 101 Outdoor Arts Creation Space - for the development of large-scale outdoor performances and residencies.
 - Learning Centre – a centre for participation in the arts.
- **The Watermill Theatre** – a multi-award-winning theatre and charitable trust. The Watermill has an international reputation for nurturing new talent, developing and touring new theatre productions and has a popular outreach programme which provides participation opportunities for people of all ages.
- **Newbury Spring Festival** - one of the most popular (mostly) classical music festivals in the South of England. Over the last 40 years the Festival has grown in size and quality building up a reputation here and abroad. The programme includes the best young musical stars alongside some of the world's most distinguished names in classical music. The festival takes place in a range of venues in Newbury and the surrounding area



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- **Arlington Arts**, Mary Hare School- originally intended as a school resource, Arlington Arts has grown into a popular local venue for music, theatre, comedy and family entertainment too.
- **The Phoenix Resource Centre**, West Berkshire Council – is a purpose-built resource centre providing services for adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and for those with frailty and dementia. The centre includes a flexible performance space for theatre and music productions and events.
- **The Base, Greenham Common**- opened in February 2019 in partnership with Greenham Trust and the Corn Exchange it is a purpose-built visual arts and craft building, the venue comprises of a gallery, artists' studios and a workshop space for participatory classes. The Base is also home to 8 visual artists and craft makers as well as Open Studios West Berkshire and North Hampshire.
- **Open Studios North Hampshire and West Berkshire**- is a non profit making organisation that celebrates the diversity of visual arts available within the local community. Every May around 100 local artists open their studios and exhibitions free of charge and are happy to talk about their creative process with visitors.
- **City Arts** – an innovative visual arts organisation that runs art courses and exhibitions, art exhibitions with local, individual artists and groups of artists. They are actively involved in the community and run seasonal community events, such as Chalkfest in August, where they take over the Market Square in Newbury and encourage people to make art on the pavements with chalks.



- **Thatcham Festival** – an annual multi-arts festival organised by Thatcham Town Council that gives local people the opportunity to get creative in workshops, learn something new at a talk, explore the local area on a walk and enjoy a range of performances including music, drama and dance. There are also exhibitions and fairs celebrating local leisure activities and crafts. All activities are offered to the public free of charge

- **Hungerford Summer Festival** – presented by HADCAF- is run entirely by volunteers and funded by Hungerford Town Council, The Town and Manor of Hungerford, and Greenham Common Trust, together with sponsorship by local businesses and individuals.

- **A wealth of voluntary and community arts organisations**, theatre and opera groups, music societies, choirs, visual arts and crafts groups, - for example: Newbury Amateur Dramatic Society, The Arts Society Newbury and many more around the district.

- **West Berkshire Museum** – West Berkshire Council. The museum was established in 1904 in two of Newbury's best loved historic buildings. It underwent a major refurbishment reopening in 2014. It is a community museum that works with the many local history and archaeological clubs and groups to tell the story of the district through exhibitions, educational and family events and activities.

- **West Berkshire Council Archaeology Service.** There are over 500,000 years of human activity in West Berkshire. The service provides

curatorial advice and information about the historic environment of the district and promotes the understanding and preservation of this fascinating resource for the benefit of all. They do this in a number of ways including: providing archaeological advice on strategic planning policies and planning applications; advancing the conservation of the historic environment by advising on improved land management; championing the contribution that the historic environment can make to the economy, leisure, tourism and local distinctiveness through programmes of education and outreach.

- **West Berkshire Council Countryside Service.** The service provides opportunities for people to access and enjoy the West Berkshire countryside. Their aim is to protect, conserve and manage our valuable and popular countryside areas for the benefit of both wildlife and people. They promote these locations for public access in a way which does not damage local wildlife, and provide educational opportunities for visitors, especially children, to learn more about these special places.

- **The Berkshire Record Office** is located in Reading and holds the archives of the Royal County of Berkshire. They look after nearly nine hundred years of the County's history and make that accessible to the public.

- **West Berkshire Libraries** - West Berkshire Council. The library service operates a hub library in Newbury and 7 branch libraries and a mobile library service across the district. Libraries also put on a range of cultural events including talks by famous authors, theatre performances, pop-up exhibitions provided by the museum and the popular Summer Reading Challenge for young people.





- **National Needlework Archive**, Greenham Common is a charity set up to promote education and participation in all aspects of needlework and textile art.

- **Shaw House** – West Berkshire Council. This Grade I listed landmark Elizabethan house is a busy conference and training centre which also promotes a year-round programme of cultural and heritage events and activities in the house and grounds including family events, craft fairs, open air theatre and cinema.

- **Greenham Common Control Tower.** The historic Greenham Control Tower opened in Summer 2018 as a visitor centre and community hub with the aim to preserve and share the historical legacy of one of the few remaining airfield buildings. Telling the story of Greenham Common whilst supporting and cooperating with local organisations for the benefit of the whole community

- **A wealth of local history and archaeology clubs, (COMMA) groups and societies** including:

Aldermaston History Group
 Basildon History Group
 Battlefields Trust
 Berkshire Archaeological Society
 Berkshire Archaeology Research Group
 Berkshire Family History Society
 Berkshire Gardens Trust
 Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group
 Berkshire Local History Association
 Boxford History Project
 Bucklebury History Group
 Cold Ash Parish Heritage Group
 East Garston Local History Society
 East Ilsley Local History Society
 Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery

Goring Gap Local History Society
 Greenham and Crookham Commons Commission
 Greenham Common Control Tower
 Hampstead Norreys Heritage Group
 Hungerford Historical Association
 Hungerford Virtual Museum
 Kennet Valley at War Trust
 Kennet & Avon Canal Trust, The
 Mortimer Local History Group
 Newbury District Field Club
 Newbury Geological Study Group
 Newbury Society, The
 Newbury Town Council- Heritage Working Group
 Pangbourne Heritage Group
 Project Purley
 Ridgeway Military and Aviation Research Group
 Welford Historical Society
 Stockcross & Surroundings History Association
 Thatcham Historical Society
 Thatcham Memorial Foundation
 The Thatcham (Old Bluecoat School) Charity
 Theale Local History Group
 West Berkshire Countryside Society
 West Berkshire Heritage Forum



- **The Nature Discovery Centre**, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, Thatcham – provides a wide range of events and activities for the public, schools and community groups to learn about and appreciate the special wildlife and wild places found in the area.

Appendix 2

Baseline: data and research

Alignment with key council strategies

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

- West Berkshire 2036. An exploration into what makes West Berkshire a fantastic place to live, work and learn now and in the future.
- Council Strategy. The purpose of this Strategy is to support the Vision 2036 and to set out six key areas that the Council wants to improve between now and 2023.
- West Berkshire COVID-19 Recovery Plan
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2020. The framework for joint working with colleagues in the health sector, looking at health inequalities and producing assessments of local need.
- Economic Development Strategy 2019 2036. Looks at how the council and its partners might meet the economic challenges likely to emerge in the coming years.
- Local Transport Plan 2011-2026. The framework for the delivery of all aspects of transport and travel for West Berkshire.

- Core Strategy (2006-2026) Development Plan. Sets out a long-term vision for West Berkshire to 2026 and translates this into spatial terms, setting out proposals for where development will go, and how this development will be built. The Core Strategy aims to make the different settlements within West Berkshire even more attractive places within which to live, work and enjoy leisure time.
- Environment Strategy 2019-2023. Sets the Councils ambition and vision towards our response to the Climate Emergency.
- The Natural Environment in Berkshire Biodiversity Strategy (2014-2020). Sets out objectives to enhance across habitats and ecosystems on land, species, people and some more general targets.



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

- To improve health, safety and wellbeing and reduce inequalities
- A West Berkshire with beautiful and diverse natural landscapes and a strong cultural offering
- To ensure that the character and distinctiveness of the natural, built and historic environment is conserved and where possible, enhanced
- To improve accessibility to community infrastructure / promote and maximise opportunities for sustainable travel
- To support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base which meets identified needs
- To support the protection of the natural environment and reduce carbon emissions
- To ensure West Berkshire recovers from the impact of COVID-19.

Other plans, strategies and data we consulted

SOURCE / ORGANISATION	PLAN / REPORTS / DATA
NHS	10 Year Long Term Plan
Arts Council England	Arts and Older People Survey, 2015 Cultural Activities, Artform and Wellbeing, 2015 The Value of Arts & Culture to People and Society Evidence review of the economic contribution of libraries Cultural and Creative Spill overs The Economic Impact of Museums in England Active Lives Survey, Mid November 2015- Mid May 2017- data available for West Berkshire Funding data: All organisations in receipt of funding from Arts Council England, and sums received (available per financial year)
What Works Wellbeing	Visual Arts and Mental Health Heritage and Wellbeing Music, Singing and Healthy Adults Music, Singing and Wellbeing
Crafts Council	Can Culture do Healthcare
All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing	Inquiry Report- Creative Health: The Arts for Health & Wellbeing, 2017

SOURCE / ORGANISATION	PLAN / REPORTS / DATA
Historic England	<p>Heritage Counts, 2018</p> <p>Local Authority Profile, 2018</p> <p>Listed Buildings Business Occupiers Survey, 2018</p> <p>Survey of Listed Buildings Owners, 2017</p> <p>Survey of Listed Buildings Owners and Conservation Areas, 2017</p> <p>Public Engagement data, 2017-18</p> <p>Heritage and Society, 2017</p>
Royal Society of Arts	Heritage Index, 2016
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	<p>Taking Part Survey 2017/18. Provides statistics re: participation, frequency, demographic (e.g. ACORN and Index of Deprivation)</p> <p>This survey includes data on participation in arts and culture (inclusive libraries, museums, archives) and includes activity such as volunteering</p> <p>CASE data (SE region, data not by available by Local Authority)</p> <p>Visit Britain- visitor economy data</p> <p>The Economic Value of Culture- a benefit transfer study</p>
Artswork (SE Region Bridge Organisation)	<p>Artsmark & Arts Awards data for West Berkshire</p> <p>Artsmark Settings in West Berkshire as of 22/07/2019</p>
National Lottery	Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery. Project funds granted to organisations within West Berkshire
Creative Industries Federation	How Public Investment in the Arts Contributes to Growth in the Creative Industries
COVID-19	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges for the cultural and heritage sectors. Government advice will continue to be monitored in the development of this strategy. For example:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-dcms-sectors-in-relation-to-coronavirus-covid-19</p> <p>https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid-19/covid-19-government-reopening-guidance-and-tax-changes</p> <p>Creative Recovery is a movement of people who use creativity to bring about social change, inspire community spirit and boost well-being and Recovery. We are innovative, dynamic and collaborative, putting people at the heart of it! Our experienced artists use a person-centred approach to create safe spaces and unique projects where individuals can thrive.</p> <p>https://www.creativerecovery.co.uk/</p>

By reviewing these plans, strategies and the available data relevant to the strategy we identified the following key themes:

- Participation in culture improves health and wellbeing.
- Investment in creative industries / culture strengthens the local economy and improves the sustainability of cultural organisations.
- Heritage and the historic environment (buildings, places, traditions) are valued by communities and visitors.

Consultees raised a number of issues which the strategy should consider:

- The cultural heritage offer in West Berkshire is strong but lacks overall co-ordination in terms of branding and promotion.
- The rural / urban nature of the district means that some have less access to culture and heritage opportunities.
- The benefits of culture for individual wellbeing are well understood but we can do more to maximise those benefits.
- We can strengthen partnership working to deliver more together.
- Inward investment is needed to increase the sustainability of our cultural organisations.





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