

East Sussex Cultural Strategy 2013 – 2023

A County of distinction, igniting the power of culture

A ten year partnership framework produced by East Sussex
County Council on behalf of government agencies and services,
key cultural organisations and cultural leaders.

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The Vision – where we want to be



By 2023 we will be able to say that:

East Sussex has a distinctive character: it is as well known for its excellent, innovative and varied cultural offer as it is for its beautiful landscapes, its history and its coastline. It is a County which understands, is proud of and actively values its cultural assets.

All sorts of businesses choose to establish themselves in East Sussex because the County will offer their employees a rich cultural offer and the quality of life which will ensure that they can attract and retain the workforce they need.

Great cultural experiences are available to everyone. Targeted investment ensures that cultural engagement is possible for all and is

used as a gateway to improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, higher educational attainment, skills development, employment and growing social capital.

Creative people choose to live here and creative businesses thrive because they are inspired by the County and are supported wisely. Planning, investment and marketing decisions at all levels shore up and enable the growth of creative businesses. Success breeds success and the cultural and creative sector is expanding.

There is a well packaged, clearly signposted, regularly refreshed cultural tourism offer: visitors come to East Sussex because they are confident they will have distinctive and exceptional cultural encounters and they stay longer because of the choice which is on offer.

The Priorities

Set out below are the priorities which we believe will help us achieve our Vision.

The purpose of this Strategy is to identify reasonable steps which can be taken to better understand, support and grow the cultural sector. We have an ambitious vision and the ten year time frame reflects this. The three identified priorities should be understood to be complementary and interdependent.

We will:

1. Create an environment where great cultural experiences are available to everyone to enhance their quality of life
2. Create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand and enhances our ability to attract and retain other businesses
3. Develop and promote well packaged cultural tourism offers which celebrate the identity of East Sussex, raise its profile and attract more visitors and businesses to the County.

Executive Summary



Culture can impact on many aspects of life. This is not just a Strategy for cultural specialists – it will also inform and support those working in social and economic regeneration, planning, property, adult social care, economic development, education, community safety and public health. It is a light touch strategic framework for the County which informs but does not dictate local plans.

It was developed by those whose responsibility it is to provide services in the County: local authorities and other public bodies, third sector providers, key cultural providers and leaders.

The strategy is the interface between regional, national and international policy and local areas, a two way relationship which provides strategic context for local policy and activity whilst projecting a collective voice at a strategic level.

Cultural organisations and activities engender pride, loyalty and a sense of place. There is a recognition from both individuals and organisations that there is a symbiotic relationship between the history of the County, its geography and geology and the cultural assets we have today.

We cannot name all the County’s organisations and events in this strategy but they are all part of the rich cultural offer of the County. There are a range of cultural organisations operating on a small scale, bringing valuable cultural experiences to people, sometimes in specialist arts venues but often in other public spaces or specializing in working with particular target groups such as Project Artworks (Hastings), a company which has a national

reputation for groundbreaking work with people with complex needs.

For some counties, a cultural strategy is the start of a journey to build a credible cultural offer. In East Sussex our challenge is a different one. We are fortunate that we enjoy not just the organisations that matter to us personally, but also venues and organisations that are valued nationally and internationally and which attract audiences and media attention from across the world. We already have the sort of cultural offer which many other counties aspire to and with this comes responsibilities and opportunities. Our vision therefore states that in order to maintain our position we must recognise how fortunate we are in our cultural offer and make the most of it. We will gain a collective reputation nationally for ambition and confidence which will attract investment so that we can make full use of our cultural resources to the benefit of residents and visitors.

We have an ambitious vision and have a ten year time frame to reflect this. The priorities identified here reflect the current context in which we are working: austerity, the deficit reduction programme, high unemployment particularly for people aged 16 to 24, the growth of digital communication, the restructure of the education sector, the reduction in capacity of the Non Departmental Public Bodies, the new South Downs National Park, an aging population, rapid increase in global competition for the creative sector and the emphasis on knowledge driven sectors in the UK.

Priority 1

Create an environment where great cultural experiences are available to everyone to enhance their quality of life

The Vision

Great cultural experiences are available to everyone. Targeted investment ensures that cultural engagement is possible for all and is used as a gateway to improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, higher educational attainment, skills development, employment and growing social capital.

Strategic Outcome

A growing cultural sector striving for excellence which enables East Sussex residents to have great places to live in, visit and enjoy, and have safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

There is a growing body of evidence to demonstrate that engaging in cultural activity can achieve a range of desirable outcomes. If we make cultural activity available to people we improve their quality of life, grow their aspirations, increase their capacity to fulfil their own potential and improve their health and wellbeing.

Access to culture depends on a range of factors: psychological access – will people enjoy/ understand what is on offer and feel that it is for them? Physical access – will people be able to get to the cultural activity? Financial access – will people be able to afford it? As we plan how to meet this priority we need to recognise that whilst some groups will be able to access cultural activity which is open to all, others will not be in a position to access activity unless it is designed specifically to reach them.

Priority 2

Create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand and enhances our ability to attract and retain other businesses.

The Vision

Creative people choose to live here and creative businesses thrive because they are inspired by the County, feel valued and are supported wisely. Planning, investment and marketing decisions at all levels shore up and enable the growth of creative businesses. Success breeds success and the cultural and creative sector is expanding.

All sorts of businesses choose to establish themselves in East Sussex because the County



will offer their employees a rich cultural offer and the quality of life which will ensure that they can attract and retain the workforce they need.

Strategic Outcome

A resilient and growing cultural and creative economy which contributes to a vibrant, diverse and sustainable mixed economy for East Sussex

The arts provide nearly 1 million jobs in the UK. 67,000 cultural businesses contribute £28bn every year to the UK economy. The UK has the largest creative sector in the EU and relative to GDP probably the largest in the world.

East Sussex has significant clusters of creative industry activity and needs to ensure that it captures its share of a sector that has proved itself to be relatively resilient during the current financial crisis. Creative industries are also identified as an important source of innovation and research shows that innovation can create new markets, productivity growth, spillovers of ideas and improved efficiency.

We want to grow our share of the Cultural and Creative sector market providing the environment which will attract and retain Cultural and Creative

Industries (CCIs). To do this we need to value and support our existing Cultural and Creative businesses, create the conditions for growth, develop a suitably skilled workforce and welcome new businesses to relocate here. We also need to provide support for those working alone.

Many creative industries require little in the way of infrastructure with their supply chains rely on digital connectivity. Consequently creative entrepreneurs are often free to locate themselves where ever they choose as long as that digital connectivity is available. They are likely therefore to select locations based on criteria which constitutes for them quality of life. As long as there is superfast broadband they will choose a place they like. East Sussex response is to be proactive in delivering superfast broadband connectivity across the County and to clearly market the quality of life it can offer its residents and businesses.

As a County we wish to attract a range of businesses to locate here, not just creative businesses. If we can offer a good standard of living in the County which includes a good cultural offer for residents then we help to attract businesses here. They will be able to offer their employees the quality of life which will ensure that they can both attract and retain the workforce they need.



Priority 3

Develop and promote well packaged cultural tourism offers which celebrate the identity of East Sussex, raise its profile and attract more visitors and businesses to the County

The Vision

There is a well packaged, clearly signposted, regularly refreshed cultural tourism offer: visitors come to East Sussex because they are confident they will have distinctive and exceptional cultural encounters and they stay longer because of the choice which is on offer.

Strategic Outcome

A thriving and high value visitor economy, with great places to visit and enjoy, renowned for its natural assets, unique heritage, culture, market and coastal towns.

East Sussex generally enjoys an outstanding local environment and cultural assets which are some of the key attractions which support the visitor economy in the County. It is described as suffering from poor transport infrastructure although some cultural organisations report turning this to an asset – with visitors to the County finding themselves obliged to experience the cultural offer of the County at a slower pace.

Tourism contributes £115bn to the English economy and as well as attracting visitors to places, the arts encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more in destinations. A 2011 survey by Tourism South East established that overnight stays in East Sussex were worth £376.6m to the County with a further £443.7m earned from day trips.

We need to increase the visibility of the County as a cultural destination, ensuring that images of our landscape and cultural institutions are marketed widely. We are fortunate in having a significant collection of heritage and arts buildings which are visually distinctive and we need to exploit this effectively to encourage visitors.

To make it easier for tourists to choose East Sussex we need to present well packaged ideas which bring together cultural attractions with other elements such as accommodation, food and drink,

walking and cycling and the environment.

East Sussex needs to increase its share of the film location market. By being proactive in attracting companies to film in East Sussex, ensuring they have a good experience when they do film here so they want to come again we not only attract the financial benefits of a film company on location and increase employment opportunities for suitably skilled filmmakers but we also increase the County’s visibility and increase our share of the tourism market.

Implementation

There is a ten year time frame for the strategy because the Vision is ambitious. The strategy respects the role that local cultural strategies play in setting direction for locally tailored cultural development. This document seeks to identify those shared priorities which may only be possible by employing a shared approach across the County.

This is a time of diminishing resources, a time where we have to make careful choices about where investment is best placed and ensure that our plans are viable and represent value for money. Having clearly set out our vision, our priorities and our direction of travel this strategy will be used to broker new partnership projects and action plans which will be refreshed during the lifetime of this strategy.

An event will be held for each priority to identify realistic actions through informed debate which brings together knowledge of the cultural sector, knowledge of the County and knowledge of the resources available.

A partnership group will be formed to “own” the strategy and drive it forward, consisting of representatives from a range of disciplines including but not limited to local government and the cultural sector.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The events planned to broker the action plans will also be used as litmus tests to see how well the strategy reflects current circumstances and priorities. The overall revision of this strategy will take place when circumstances shift significantly enough to require a reconsideration of our plans and priorities. Annual reports on progress will be produced.

I. Introduction



I.1 Definition of Culture

The definition of culture has always been and remains an area of debate with attempts to explain the difference between for example: cultural activity and cultural identity, considered in far greater detail elsewhere than we shall attempt to cover here. Essentially we have focussed on a definition of culture which we believe it is in our gift to influence, and which it is useful for us to influence.

In May 2007 the DCMS publication: A Framework for Evaluating Cultural Policy Investment defined culture as: arts, libraries, museums, galleries, broadcasting, film and the music industry; architecture and the historic environment.

The DCMS mapping document for the Creative Industries produced in 1996 defined the creative industries as: Advertising, Antiques, Architecture, Crafts, Design, Fashion, Film, Leisure software, Music, Performing Arts, Publishing, Software and TV and radio. This definition has been widely adopted since. It is currently under review but no new definition has yet been agreed upon.

For the purposes of this Strategy we limit our definition to align with these sources.

I.2 Who is this Strategy for?

Culture can impact on many aspects of life. This is not just a Strategy for cultural specialists – it will also inform and support those working in social and economic regeneration, planning, property, adult social care, economic development,

education, community safety and public health.

The Cultural Strategy for East Sussex addresses those issues which cannot be tackled at a local level and does not attempt to address that which is best addressed locally. It is a light touch strategic framework for the County which informs but does not dictate local plans.

It was developed by those whose responsibility it is to provide services in the County: local authorities and other public bodies, third sector providers, key cultural providers and leaders.

Project Art Works: In Transit

In 2009 Project Art Works delivered In Transit – a film project benefitting 36 young people with complex needs who were in transition to adulthood. The project innovation was to embed film within the statutory assessments, planning and processes of transition services.

“[I’ve benefited from] a different way of working with Beth and other young people. Sometimes our work is pretty dry but it has to be person centred, this has really shown how to work in a person centred way, and in a creative way.”*

ESCC Social Worker, Transition Team 2013

*Name changed to protect privacy



The strategy is the interface between regional, national and international policy and local areas, a two way relationship which provides strategic context for local policy and activity whilst projecting a collective voice at a strategic level.

I.3 What is the Strategy’s purpose?

The Strategy’s purpose is to:

- Describe the power and impact of the cultural sector both economically, environmentally and socially in the County currently
- Provide leadership by setting County level strategic direction and priorities for investment
- Identify reasonable steps which can be taken to secure a thriving cultural sector for the future.

The strategy acknowledges the complexity of the challenge to achieve the Vision set out and its ten year time frame reflects this. It respects the role that local cultural strategies play in setting direction for locally tailored cultural development. This document seeks to identify those shared priorities which may only be possible by employing a shared approach across the County.

I.4 What is an excellent or great cultural experience?

When we attempt to define excellent or great cultural experiences we encounter the fact that everyone’s experience of culture is different and everyone’s idea of what is excellent or great is different– we all have different tastes, opinions, life experiences and values, and all of this influences how we perceive a cultural experience.

East Sussex will recognise the importance of striving for excellence, originality and innovation, curatorial and scholarly endeavour, inspiring interpretation and real engagement with people and communities. This is not about scale – small events can be great events. In the words of Arts Council England’s Great Art for Everyone:

“...it is simply the bravest, most original, most innovative, most perfectly realised work of which people are capable – whether in the creation of art, its performance, its communication or its impact on audiences.”

The sector is often asked to deliver experiences and interventions which will transform lives to achieve positive outcomes. If it is to do that it must be allowed the freedom to offer the excellent cultural experiences which have the power to achieve this. Projects with mediocre ambitions will produce mediocre outcomes. The sector must be trusted (and in turn must earn the trust) to do what it does best – to be creative, responsive, innovative, entrepreneurial, experimental and brave. A cultural project which is not these things is not powerful and will not deliver the transformative impact that is expected of it.

I.5 Pride of Place, the Sustainable Community Strategy

Because it can work so quickly, can capture the imagination and garner a range of resources, culture is the storm troops of regeneration”

Franco Bianchini

This strategy responds to the vision set out in “Pride of Place”, the Sustainable Community Strategy produced and led by the East Sussex Strategic Partnership. The Strategy states that “We want to raise the quality of life for all our residents by securing their future prosperity and well-being and improving the places where they live, work and spend their leisure time. Our vision therefore is: to create places where everyone can prosper, be safe and healthy, and live in a high quality environment.”

To achieve this vision, our main objectives are to create and sustain:

- A vibrant, diverse and sustainable economy
- Great places to live in, visit and enjoy, and
- Safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Enabling people to enjoy culture, sports and leisure is one of the ten priorities identified. Culture earns its place as a priority because, as with the others it is not simply important in its own right but has a role to play in delivering the other priorities we have identified for our County. This Strategy describes how the sector can contribute to these overarching County priorities to achieve relevant outcomes.

The evidence base for the impact of culture is growing, but the sector still has a great deal to achieve in this area. East Sussex will contribute to this work, investing in research and cultivating the

practice of data driven decision making (although not solely driven by data). We will also lobby for and contribute to greater investment into research to increase all our understanding of the sector and its contribution to our County.

“...volunteering for a community based cultural project increases an individual’s ability to empathise with others. Cultural, artistic and sporting activities provide opportunities to discover new types of self-expression and to develop a wider range of human capacities and ‘intelligences’. Passions can develop. All can increase feelings of self-worth, confidence and motivation.... Strong neighbourhood networks can have a significant impact on quality of life. Data from the British Household Panel Survey highlights a strong link between personal wellbeing and talking to neighbours... There is also evidence that the existence of social networks is linked to lower levels of crime, and improved educational achievement and health.”

The State of Happiness, The Young Foundation

Act On It

J had a history of exclusions and found it difficult to make positive relationships with people in authority and her peers. She had a statement of special needs and Asperger’s Syndrome. She had spent time as a looked after child in foster care. Through a supported active citizenship programme, J participated in a project where she befriended older residents in a local residential home, collected their stories and incorporated them into a performance exploring the fear of crime. This was performed in the day room to the residents. Since the project she has successfully gained a place at college. She is doing well and continues to work positively in the community.

‘I think my responsibility grew because I feel I had more to do and more to be in charge of. This made me feel important.’

2. Where are we now?



78.2% of people in the UK have participated in the arts in the last year (81.9% in the South East). (2012)

2.1 Understanding the East Sussex Context and Priorities

2.1.1 The Cultural Offer

Cultural organisations and activities engender pride, loyalty and a sense of place. For many people in East Sussex their favourite venue may not be of more than local significance but where it plays a positive role in a person’s life it will be an invaluable part of what makes East Sussex special to them.

For some counties, a cultural strategy is the start of a journey to build a credible cultural offer. In East Sussex our challenge is a different one. We are fortunate that we enjoy not just the organisations that matter to us personally, but also venues and organisations that are valued nationally and internationally and which attract audiences and media attention from across the world. We already have the sort of cultural offer which many other counties aspire to and with this comes responsibilities and opportunities. Our Vision therefore states that in order to maintain our position we must recognise how fortunate we are in our cultural offer, take care of it and make the most of it. We will gain a collective reputation nationally for ambition and confidence which will attract investment so that we can make full use

of our cultural resources to the benefit of residents and visitors.

The County is unusual in hosting a number of internationally known building based cultural organisations, from West to East: Glyndebourne, Lewes (opera); Towner, Eastbourne (gallery); De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill on Sea (gallery, auditorium, outdoor performance space) and Jerwood (gallery) in Hastings represent an extraordinary concentration of significant cultural organisations. With the exception of Glyndebourne they are all based in seaside towns and are predominantly, if not solely, visual arts venues. This critical mass of highly visible organisations does not simply deliver cultural activity, provide employment and drive up tourism spend, it also helps to shape the identity of the County, with each organisation creating and informing the sense of place in their respective locations.

There are a number of significant historical properties many of which are associated with culturally significant historical figures. The National Trust alone runs Alfriston Clergy House, Bateman’s at Burwarsh (Kipling), Lamb House at Rye (Henry James and E.F.Benson), Bodiam Castle, Monks House at Rodmell (Virginia Woolf) and Sheffield Park Gardens. The County also has Charleston (home of the Bloomsbury Group), Farley Farmhouse (Lee Miller and Roland Penrose) and Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft (Eric Gill). There is a wealth of further historic buildings such as the recently restored Glynde Place and many monuments registered on the English Heritage Historic Monuments register.

There are a number of small theatres mostly run as spaces for hire or by voluntary groups and a significant cluster of professionally run theatres in Eastbourne on the Devonshire Park site as well the White Rock Theatre in Hastings. These theatres are not resourced to provide outreach work and are programmed largely to ensure financial viability. They struggle because they were originally built for the thriving British seaside holiday market which is no longer a sound foundation for a business.

There is a range of initiatives to develop shared working spaces for creative individuals – most notably the School Creative Centre at Rye and a range of professional networks including Hastings Creatives and Wired Sussex which hosts East Sussex specific events.

With such a wealth of visible building based cultural organisations there is a risk of concentrating on them to the detriment of cultural activity which is not building based. There are rich traditions in the County, not least the Bonfire Society tradition which is almost unique to East Sussex. The origins of this tradition are found in religious and political

strife and the event is therefore the source of much controversy, but as a pageant and festival it is one of the most deep rooted events in the UK and plays a significant part in many people’s lives.

We cannot name all the County’s organisations and events in this strategy but they are all part of the rich cultural offer of the County. There are a range of cultural organisations operating on a smaller scale, bringing valuable cultural experiences to people, sometimes in specialist arts venues but often in other public spaces or specializing in working with particular target groups such as Project Artworks (Hastings), a company which has a national reputation for groundbreaking work with people with complex needs.

Some cultural strategies attempt to map their cultural assets. There are pitfalls to this approach. Defining what constitutes a cultural asset, assessing whether it is fit for purpose and whether there are enough cultural assets is a resource hungry process which is rarely justified by the knowledge gained and rapidly becomes out of date. Built infrastructure does not necessarily indicate high



levels of engagement (Lewes has the highest levels of engagement in the County but very little in the way of recognisable cultural buildings). If by assets we mean the raw materials from which we build a cultural offer then this is as much about creative people, places, attitudes and networks as it is about a specific building and these things cannot be mapped. For these reasons we have not attempted a bespoke mapping exercise for this strategy but we do draw on a wealth of existing data (referred to in Appendix 1) to ensure that our priorities are appropriate for East Sussex.

2.1.2 Geography and Demographics

Individuals and organisations recognise that there is a symbiotic relationship between the history of the County, its geography and geology (see the Landscape Character Assessments) and the cultural assets we have today.

East Sussex is a County of contrasts and variety. It comprises the coastal urban boroughs of Eastbourne and Hastings, and mixed coastal and rural districts of Lewes, Rother and Wealden. It has a population of just over half a million people. Over three-quarters of the population live in urban areas or market towns. However the County is predominately rural with almost two-thirds falling either within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the South Downs National Park.

To the west the County is made visually distinctive by the South Downs and the heritage coastline which includes the famous Seven Sisters. Much of the western part of the County is in the South Downs National Park. This part of the County has relatively quick access to London by road and rail and the City of Brighton and Hove. Both London and the City of Brighton and Hove have higher than average engagement in cultural activity and make significant investment in their cultural infrastructure. Engagement levels particularly in Lewes are above the national average and it is likely that whilst this is due in part to a thriving cultural scene in Lewes itself, it also due to the fact that residents access culture in London and Brighton.

The rural hinterland is generally more prosperous with communities able to access culture both in East Sussex and across the borders into Kent and West Sussex. Not all people living in rural areas are well off though and those who rely on public transport cannot easily access the County’s cultural

offer, particularly young people.

To the east, apart from the slower links to London, Rother sits on the edge of the Romney Marsh and shares its borders with a sparsely populated part of Kent which has little in the way of cultural infrastructure. Although a generalisation, it is largely true that deprivation indices rise and education attainment and life expectancy drops the further east you travel along the coast. The east of the County is proud of its historical associations with 1066 and the Norman Invasion, it has strong local cultural traditions such as Jack in the Green and the (more recently created) Pirate Festival as well the strong influence of the fishing community in Hastings. All of these factors influence the cultural activity which emerges and subsequent patterns of engagement.

Investment in improved broadband connectivity and speed is taking place which helps to mitigate transport issues but poor connectivity remains an issue.

LM who lives in an isolated, rural area is agoraphobic. LM has gradually developed a relationship with The School Creative Centre through attending Writers’ workshops and now feels confident enough to attend the event where her poem was being shown.

2.1.3 The Local Government Contribution

“There is a symbiotic relationship between publicly funded cultural infrastructure and a thriving creative industry sector”

John Holden, Demos Publicly Funded Culture and the Creative Industries

Historically there has been less in the way of visible cultural offer and there has been a greater need for strategic interventions to grow the presence and the impact of the cultural sector. This is reflected in the investment shown by Hastings Borough, Rother District, Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils in their cultural infrastructure and their respective locally pertinent cultural strategic frameworks. Each of these councils recognises the development of the cultural sector as a priority and has ambitious and bold plans. Hastings alone has seen over £30m of investment in the last ten years with the building of the Jerwood

Gallery, the creation of the Stade performance space, new facilities at Sussex Coast College, the refurbishment of Hastings Museum and most recently the investment in the restoration of the pier. The 2013 bid for UK City of Culture shared with Rother reflects the level of ambition the Council has for its population.

Eastbourne Borough Council has ambitious plans for the redesign of the Devonshire Park which would see improved theatre and tennis facilities. The capital investment is likely to be one of the most significant investments in cultural infrastructure nationally in the life span of this strategy.

“Regardless of how much they personally enjoy spending time reading, people understand that reading brings benefits – they attach value to it. Many of the these benefits relate to how they personally feel or how they view the world; reading offers relaxation, stimulation and broadening of the mind, new perspectives on one’s own life and inspiration.”

Arts Council England, The Future of Reading

Rother invests in the De La Warr Pavilion and has recently refurbished the seafront to improve the visitor experience.

Both Lewes and Wealden recognise the value of cultural tourism and supporting creative businesses.

Local government is also required to respond to some key environmental drivers: there is the pressure to increase housing stock with the knock on pressure on our green spaces and added pressure to local services. Work has started on the new link road which will reduce east/west journey times across the County. This is predicted to help stimulate business growth.

The County Council recognises that it has a unique County-wide overview and has renewed its commitment to the cultural sector by leading on the development of this strategy. A number of networks have been established: Cultural Leaders, marketing and arts organisations. These networks are starting to generate more information about the sector, encouraging a broader understanding of what the sector has to offer. Individual organisations are exploring new ways of working together to allow

resources to go further and increase impact. The sector is now represented on the East Sussex Strategic Assembly. Both cultural leaders and the County Council play a regional and national role to ensure that East Sussex is represented in terms of policy development and direction of resources – maintaining productive working relationships with bodies such as Arts Council England, English Heritage, South East Bridge Advisory Group and Contemporary Visual Arts Network. This Strategy will provide a statement of common purpose to underpin these relationships.

East Sussex Library and Information Service supports Read aloud groups which take place in libraries and community spaces where people come together to share poetry and prose, led by trained facilitators.

“Nice relaxing group I feel very safe.”

“I feel I can talk about anything.”

“The group has actually helped me to want to read a novel.”

“You don’t have to be perfect, no one judges you.”

2.2 The context beyond East Sussex

The features which most distinguish this period are:

A time of austerity: the UK is in the grip of a global financial crisis. The population has less to spend and is far less confident about its economic future and therefore cautious about where it spends money.

The deficit reduction programme: all government funded organisations are trying to deliver more for less. No longer does a saving in one area make for increased resources somewhere else – if we can do without it, we will. The public sector is the largest employer in the County so there is a significant impact in East Sussex on employment levels and prosperity as the public sector shrinks.

High unemployment: in particular unemployment for people aged 16 to 24 is at an unprecedented high. This is not just a personal tragedy for individuals, but represents a huge risk for the future workforce of the UK.

Digital development: the prevalence of digital platforms, the speed at which the digital world is expanding, the impact this is having on the way we work, play, socialise, consume and produce cultural products is a key consideration in all aspects of running the cultural businesses of the future. Its significance is only likely to grow.

Digital engagement provokes new social divides between those who have easy access to the digital world (they own their own pcs/smart phones/tablets etc.), those that rely on public provision to access digital media (a service which libraries play a significant part in through the People’s Network) and those who have no access. Add to this the variable broadband speeds in the County and the fact that there are still pockets of the County where broadband is currently unavailable and a whole new set of inequalities must be addressed.

Restructure of the education sector: with the advent of the academies programme, free schools and studio schools and significant changes to the curriculum the challenge of working in partnership



with the education sector is multiplied by its more disparate structure as well as the fact that the new curriculum and assessment criteria downgrades the value of cultural education.

Student tuition fees: this is impacting on the availability of cultural courses as students’ willingness to undertake courses which are perceived as less likely to lead directly to employment and the earning potential to pay off student loans reduces.

Reduction in capacity of the Non Departmental Public Bodies: the closure of the Regional Development Agencies removed a major source of support for the sector; Arts Council England’s reduction in staff capacity means that applicants to lottery funding (the largest pot of funding available to arts organisations) receive less personalised support to ensure successful applications. Lottery funds are available, but attracting that funding has become even more challenging. Without Tourism South East as a publicly funded body there is less data available to inform tourism planning and no one organisation to lead.

South Downs National Park: a large part of East Sussex is now part of the newest National Park in the UK. The implications of this continue to play out – and will offer both opportunities and limitations.

Ageing population: nationally the country’s population is ageing, and the consequent impact on tax revenues, strain on health service and caring services impact on the public purse.

Rapid increase in higher education in countries such as India and China, Russia and Brazil and their emerging economies has led to new global competition for the creative sector.

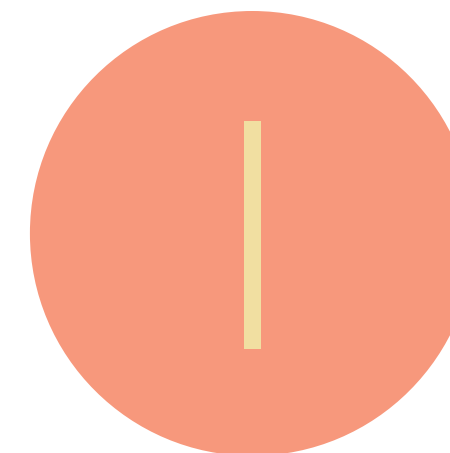
The industrial structure of the UK is changing with more emphasis on knowledge driven sectors, increasing the value of a cultural education.

The following pages set out the priorities which we believe will help us achieve our Vision.





Priority



Create an environment where great cultural experiences are available to everyone to enhance their quality of life

The Vision

Great cultural experiences are available to everyone. Targeted investment ensures that cultural engagement is possible for all and is used as a gateway to improved physical and mental health and wellbeing, higher educational attainment, skills development, employment and growing social capital.

Strategic Outcome

A growing cultural sector striving for excellence which enables East Sussex residents to have great places to live in, visit and enjoy, and have safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

3.1.1 Why do we want great cultural experiences to be available to everyone?

There is a growing body of evidence to demonstrate that engaging in cultural activity can achieve a range of desirable outcomes. Cultural activity leads to social cohesion; it encourages social interaction which in turn reduces anti-social behaviour and fear of crime; it can re-engage young people not in employment, education or training. If we make cultural activity available to people we improve their quality of life, grow their aspirations, increase their capacity to fulfil their own potential and improve their health and wellbeing.

For example: research has established that music can aid people with dementia; dance can address obesity and self esteem issues in young people and literature can address mental health issues. Volunteering as part of a cultural project from building stalls for the local fete to researching local history or selling tickets for the local amateur dramatics show, builds social connections. These social connections have been proved contribute to our quality of life. As a supplement to medicine and care, participation in cultural activity can improve health outcomes and increase wellbeing.

At its best, the cultural sector is welcoming and inclusive, generating social capital, encouraging responsible citizenship and delivering more than the sum of its parts. For example Applause Rural Touring is a delivery model based on local people choosing and hosting professional shows in their own local community spaces. Applause selects professional shows that are available nationally and produces a menu of options. Decisions are made at local level about programming, cost and how the event takes place (for example some shows are combined with a fish and chip supper). The success of the event depends on the commitment at local level with Applause underwriting the financial risk. Attending such an event introduces neighbours to each other and helps build the network of relationships which create a neighbourhood and social connections which can reduce antisocial behaviour and fear of crime.

Cultural engagement has been linked to increased educational attainment for children and young people. Cultural activity can re-engage a child

Annie*, a participant in Towner's Arts in Minds project, tells her story:

"For a long time I've been ill with anxiety and depression and I'd got to a stage where I didn't know what to do next. I was told by the mental health team that a group was starting at the Towner Gallery that may help. I attended the group to start socialising again, and it was a bonus that we also had space and materials to create art, something I've always loved to do. They were very supportive and welcoming and it was really great to be with others who understand, but also there is no pressure to share information about your self."

"I had been thinking of trying some voluntary work, so as I was comfortable at Towner, this seemed like an ideal place to start. A volunteer who was helping out in the group at the time showed me around the gallery, and gave me an idea of what it's like to volunteer. During this I met a Gallery assistant who was very friendly, which really encouraged me to give it a go. They let me start with just a couple of hours a week and built it up gradually. Now I am doing a voluntary Summer Placement programme here. I have gained a great deal of confidence."

*Name changed to protect participant's identity

or young person who is in danger of dropping out of the education system. Cultural projects also develop skills which are valuable in the workplace, raising self esteem and even leading to vocational careers.

Literacy is the gateway to the majority of opportunities in life. Cultural activity can play its part in increasing literacy levels in the County, providing the motivation to improve literacy skills, offering vehicles which make this learning enjoyable and rewarding.

People taking part in cultural activities are 20% more likely to know "many people" in their neighbourhood and 60% more likely to believe that many of their neighbours can be trusted. Taking Part Survey.

Feedback from Heritage Open Days showed that 84% felt participating made them feel more a part of the local community. 88% were made more aware of their shared heritage 94% made them appreciate their local area more. Heritage Counts 2009.

"Participating in leisure, arts and other community activities can promote improved wellbeing and community connectedness."

No health without mental health: a cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages, Department of Health, 2011

3.1.2 How do people access cultural activity?

Accessibility depends on a range of factors: psychological access – will people enjoy/understand what is on offer and feel that it is for them? Physical access – will people be able to get to the cultural activity? Financial access – will people be able to afford it?

Various tools exist to understand the habits and inclinations of different social groups – the most relevant to this Strategy is Arts Audiences: Insight, the Arts Council tool which categorises the different ways in which people engage in cultural activity. Some people will choose not to engage in cultural activities but we want to ensure that this is a choice rather than a form of social exclusion and that where people want to enjoy cultural activity it is available to them, they feel welcome and they feel able to generate activity themselves.

As we plan how to meet this priority we need to recognise that whilst some groups will be able to access cultural activity which is open to all (not withstanding the challenges to make activity truly open to all) others will not be in a position to access activity unless it is designed specifically to reach them. For example people who are physically isolated perhaps by illness, imprisonment or a role as a carer, will only be able to take part in culture if projects are designed specifically to meet their needs; or looked after children and

young people who may have less support to access cultural activity.

Cultural organisations seek ways to increase their accessibility and engage with people at an appropriate level through their main programmes, as well as their education and outreach offer.

The education sector has always had a pivotal role to play in introducing children and young people to cultural experiences. The sector is in a period of significant change with many schools opting to become Academies, Free Schools and Studio Schools, leading to a decentralisation of the system. The Henley Review of Cultural Education (2012), in line with his earlier review of Music Education looked at how to address this important aspect of education in the light of diminishing resources. Henley points towards a more joined up approach between the cultural sector and the education sector. Two models of this are now being tested: Music Hubs have been set up which are made up of both education and cultural organisations, and The Bridge has been established to develop closer links between education, youth provision and the professional arts sector across the whole cultural spectrum. Just how this is to be achieved remains uncharted territory although the East Sussex Music Hub has got off to a good start with a committed set of partners signed up. At the centre of the Music Hub sits East Sussex Music Service which brings music education including classical, jazz, rock and pop to 12000 young people every year. In the long run this change in the education sector will also impact on Priority Two (Enable the cultural and creative economy to expand and increase prosperity).

Creative Partnerships Summer School Hastings: *“It gave kids confidence, enhanced self esteem in all manner of things – really wonderful! The young people learnt skills they didn’t think they had, they were praised, and told they were good at things they didn’t know they were good at.”*

Creative Partnerships drop-in family arts workshops: *“It’s given me the belief I’m capable of things I didn’t realise; It gave me so much more confidence to do things I never thought I’d ever do – I’ve amazed myself too!”*

3.1.3 Where are we now?

In common with many other sectors the cultural sector is often caricatured in the media – with the most outrageous and extravagant stories making the headlines. In reality cultural organisations are customer focussed, delivering programmes which win them loyal and committed audiences and participants. They rely heavily on the good will of volunteers, dedicated but poorly paid staff who work for far longer hours than they are contracted for, operate in poorly resourced buildings which are often not fit for purpose and where maintenance is usually beyond the organisation’s financial capacity. They rely on an unstable and unpredictable mix of earned income, sponsorship, funding and donations to secure cash flow. Very few have any substantial contingency or reserves. Most of this is true whether the organisation is publicly supported, commercial, Trust or local authority run, whether it is a venue based organisation employing a range of staff or a single practitioner with no dedicated office or workshop space. Even operating in these challenging circumstances the sector is an invaluable resource.

There are organisations delivering targeted activity to people who are not in a position to access activity unless it is designed specifically to reach them. They are relatively modest in number and it is hoped that we can grow the capacity of the sector to deliver effective work specifically commissioned by other sectors. Cultural activity is employed with offenders and those at risk of offending (e.g. Glyndebourne Education, Towner). Theatre can foster empathy in young people, song writing can draw out underlying issues which lead to offending, producing a music video can raise self esteem and aspirations in a young person excluded from school (e.g. Entertainment Workshops).

Commissioners from other disciplines are willing to work with the cultural sector but their requirements are understandably stringent in terms of delivery, measurement, standards and safeguarding. There is good practice in place to assist any new organisation to learn about commissioning processes and receive advice and coaching before considering this route.

Protecting and improving people’s health and wellbeing is not just about good and accessible health, social care and wellbeing services. Social, economic and environmental factors can also have an impact. The newly formed Clinical





Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the Health and Well Being Board, guided by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (a comprehensive tool for understanding the County’s specific health needs) and the Health and Well Being Strategy are committed to adding value to partnership working within and across the County to improve the social, environmental and economic factors that affect people’s health and well being, including access to culture.

There are strategies in place which would benefit from a strong cultural sector able to assist in achieving outcomes. Notably: Living Longer, Living Well, East Sussex Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults in later life and their carers – 2010/2015 identifies a number of priorities including “Develop and improve the range of community services to promote independence and wellbeing”. The Strategy states the intention to work with partners in the voluntary and community sector to further develop preventive services and social opportunities, and increase social capital (the community networks that help improve people’s

quality of life); continue the implementation of the quality of life strategy ‘Time of our Lives’, and its action plan; linking with library services to promote the activities they offer, which can contribute to improving quality of life and mental well-being, and help to tackle social isolation.

Rather than defining target groups within the context of this Strategy, this document recognises that other specialist services identify priorities and target groups based on extensive data and evidence of need. The cultural sector will not attempt to duplicate this work but will be guided by other partners. This avoids ignoring existing resources, duplicating effort and also ensures that this Strategy will have a longer shelf life by remaining flexible and responsive.

3.1.4 Where do we want to be?

Given its value to East Sussex we need to take steps to provide a more secure, stable and supportive environment for the sector to operate in so that it can be in a position to deliver so much more.

Arts in schools has been shown not only to create intrinsically valuable skills for life and employment, but significantly improve performance in other subjects. In 2006 an Ofsted report asserted that most Creative Partnerships programmes were effective in developing in pupils some attributes of creative people: an ability to improvise, take risks, show resilience and collaborate with others.

Whilst total financial security is not a realistic aim (very few businesses in any sector achieve this), steps which mitigate financial instability would increase the sector’s effectiveness greatly.

There will not be any significant increase in local resources so we must make best use of what we have. We must also get better at attracting investment from elsewhere. Investment that exists must be used wisely in line with the Strategy’s priorities. Mechanisms to enable efficient joined up working such as a wealth of networks to provide peer support, inspiration and sharing of skills is well documented as a key health indicator to a successful cultural presence. Marketing initiatives which cut across the sector to bring added value are also needed.

Information, data, case studies and robust enquiry needs to be collected or initiated to ensure that planning and delivery are informed, and to assist the sector in offering its services to achieve other outcomes. Those cultural organisations for which commissioned work is an appropriate part of their business model need to be equipped to respond to commissions. The more that is invested in understanding the true impact of a cultural organisation (ranging from contribution to the local economy to reduction in anti-social behaviour) the better equipped an organisation is when it seeks this sort of investment. The relationship between applicant and donor should be based on information, an exchange of goods and services, and a negotiation between equals. Often this is undermined because the cultural organisation is not equipped to assert what it has to offer. A lot of shared cultural activity requires places for people to come together. Some activity needs a tailor made setting, lots of cultural activity just needs a community space. The National Planning Policy Framework has replaced former planning guidance. As we plan our built environment we must ensure that we plan for spaces to enable activity to happen. This should not only be planned on existing levels of activity but should allow room for an increase in participation levels. It will be important as we move forward in a

challenging financial and demographic context, with particular reference to our ageing population, to ensure that all agencies with responsibilities for the commissioning or provision of public services maximise opportunities to align our shared objectives to greatest effect. We anticipate that the Health and Wellbeing Board will be a key forum to enable this collaborative approach.

In a survey of 26,000 children, 68% of 11-14 year olds thought museum visits made school work more inspiring and 90% of 7 -11 year olds learnt new things as a result of the visit.



Ben’s story*, Case Study: Towner Gallery’s Pathway Programme

Ben came to Pathways in September 2011 with a vague interest in Art and no confidence. Due to pressures at home he had struggled to engage at school and was on a reduced programme whereby he studied the core subjects at school and came to Towner for the weekly Pathways on Wednesdays. Ben did not settle in immediately, in fact he walked out after half an hour on the first day and was unable to control his anger within the group. When he did return he tested boundaries and provoked issues with other participants.

Yet over the following terms he built a firm relationship with Pathways staff and artist educators and this in turn gave him the confidence to learn new skills in a wide variety of medium. Alongside this he developed his anger management skills. He succeeded in achieving his Bronze Arts Awards. Unfortunately Ben stopped attending school altogether but he did not give up on Pathways and demonstrating great determination he went on to be the first and only student on the programme to achieve his Silver Arts Award. This (his only qualification) has secured him a place at college.

**Name changed to protect participant’s identity*



2010 Residents’ Survey from the East Sussex Safety Partnership: You told us that your top concerns included anti-social behaviour.

A 2009 Residents’ Panel Survey on how the recession was affecting households and what residents wanted from the council revealed the following: amount of disposable income or investment income – over half of respondents were affected by a decrease in income; quality of life – for a third of you has got worse and amongst the top three most useful pieces of information to help you to survive the recession were things to do and places to go that are free of charge.

Two Residents’ Panel Surveys undertaken in early and late 2011 identified that among the top three things that need improving was activities for teenagers (72% and 71%).



Priority

2



Create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand and enhance our ability to attract and retain other businesses

The Vision

Creative people choose to live here and creative businesses thrive because they are inspired by the County, feel valued and are supported wisely. Planning, investment and marketing decisions at all levels shore up and enable the growth of creative businesses. Success breeds success and the cultural and creative sector is expanding.

All sorts of businesses choose to establish themselves in East Sussex because the County will offer their employees a rich cultural offer and the quality of life which will ensure that they can attract and retain the workforce they need.

Strategic Outcome

A resilient and growing cultural and creative economy which contributes to a vibrant, diverse and sustainable mixed economy for East Sussex.

3.2.1 Developing our economy, creating jobs and increasing prosperity

An independent analysis of the economic value of public investment in arts and culture, published by Arts Council England in 2013 shows that the sector

generates a “significant” return on government spending. The analysis, by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) shows that arts and culture has a turnover of £12.4bn and makes up 0.4% of GDP. CEBR’s analysis counts this as a “significant” return on the less than 0.1% of government spending invested in the sector. It concludes that far from weakening, the economic contribution of the arts and cultural sector has grown since 2008 despite the drop in output of the UK economy as a whole.

Arts and culture also generate more per pound invested than the health, wholesale and retail, and professional and business services sectors, according to CEBR. The sector also provides 0.45% of total UK employment, and 0.48% of total employment in England.

The UK has the largest creative sector in the EU and relative to GDP probably the largest in the world. In 2008 the film industry alone earned £1.34bn in exports and television exports rose by 25% reaching £980m.

These impressive headline statistics do mask some vulnerabilities. Even during the boom years of the early 2000s there were years when the UK creative industries employment, business growth and contribution to GVA declined. The sector was overall reliant on specific sub sectors: 45% of high growth firms in terms of employment were from software, computer games and electronic publishing. Turn over growth was reliant on new software, computer games, TV and radio.

Creative industries are also identified as an important source of innovation, and research shows that innovation can create new markets, productivity growth, spillovers of ideas and improved efficiency.

East Sussex has significant clusters of creative industry activity and needs to ensure that it captures its share of a sector that has proved itself to be relatively resilient during the current financial crisis.

“The UK is the third-largest market in the world for sales of music and the market leader in Europe. The industry estimates that it is worth £5bn a year and has an export value of £1.3bn”. Creative Industries UK, Uk Trade and Investment

UK film contributes more than £4.6bn to UK GDP and more than £1.3bn to the Exchequer. Growth outstrips the UK economy and the overall picture is one of continued long-term growth. The number of jobs has also risen, with the UK film industry supporting 117,000 direct and indirect jobs, up from 100,000 in 2009. The Economic Impact of the UK Film Industry, Oxford Economics

3.2.2 Where are we now?

“...the UK is moving from a having a strong creative sector to becoming a “creative economy”
Creative Survival in Hard Times, New Deal of the Mind Report for Arts Council England (March 2010)

The East Sussex Economic Development Strategy Vision is that: “By 2021, East Sussex will have a stronger, more resilient, inclusive and balanced economy, built on an expanded private sector base in a County recognised for its distinctive character and excellent connectivity.” And goes on to prioritise: “...East Sussex will have a more diverse economy with expanded health, hospitality, tourism sectors, creative/cultural and high-value sectors...”

The County faces a number of challenges including a low wage economy, high levels of worklessness and benefit dependency in the more deprived wards, under representation of high growth sectors,

and the majority of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) only serving local markets. Some rural communities are still suffering from the decline of traditional land based industries. In addition, job density is low and many areas rely heavily on public sector jobs which are vulnerable in the current economic climate.

A study based on the most recent Annual Business Inquiry 2008 (undertaken by Birmingham University) of the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCIs) in the South East Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) indicates that creative industries in the South East have been more dynamic in their growth than the national average. Overall, CCIs have increased both in terms of firms (12.1%) and jobs (12%) in the South East from 2003 to 2008. Whilst the increase in the number of creative firms equals the British average, the regional growth in the number of creative jobs is 3% above the national average (9.2%).

The study also showed that East Sussex has higher than average concentrations of some creative businesses – in Lewes: film and photography, music, visual and performing arts, digital and entertainment media, film and television whilst Rother shows a higher density than the rest of the County for publishing companies.

The weakness of the ABI as source data is that it only considers VAT registered businesses. It therefore does not take into account proprietors (‘sole traders, sole proprietors, partners and directors’) which make up a significant proportion of the sector. Working proprietors represented 5.7% of all employment in Great Britain in 2008 with a similar proportion in the South East. However, this proportion rises to an average of 9.1% for the creative industries for the whole of Britain. In sectors such as Design, Designer Fashion and Video, Film and Photography, working proprietors accounted for more than 15% of employment in the sector. In the South East, six creative sectors presented higher proportions of working proprietors compared with their British sectoral average: Architecture, Arts and Antiques, Design, Designer Fashion, Video, Film and Photography and Radio and TV. Figures by sectors and LEP show various profiles with the Coast to Capital and the Kent, Greater Essex and East Sussex having more than 10% of their employment taken by working proprietors.





In summary, these figures highlight the importance of entrepreneurship, sole traders and small firms for most creative sectors across the South East. If we are to support the creative sector we need to take into account then that it is made up largely of both SMEs and Proprietors and is consequently not always particularly visible or easy to target.

The rapid increase in higher education in countries such as India and China, Russia and Brazil and their emerging economies has led to new global competition for the creative sector. Analysis of what has made the UK creative sector a world leader points to a combination of the country's tradition of freedom of expression, our education system and our broad cultural offer which inspires creative entrepreneurs. It is generally recognised that there is a symbiotic relationship between the voluntary, publicly supported and academic cultural organisations and the commercial sector. For example the animators working on Harry Potter films are often trained through Fine Arts degrees in sculpture. Craft Council supported designers influence popular high street store designs, London Fashion Week designs are rapidly imitated and appear in supermarket chains.

The University of Brighton at Hastings offers: broadcast media, broadcast journalism, digital film production and post production, radio and television production, digital games computing and we need to consider how to retain graduates in the County. The Rye Studio School will be the first Studio School in the South East and will specialise in creative training. Links between creative courses and the work environment must be secured.

3.2.3 Where do we want to be?

In East Sussex we want to grow our share of the Cultural and Creative sector market providing the environment which will attract and retain CCIs. To do this we need to value and support our existing Cultural and Creative businesses, create the conditions for growth, develop a suitably skilled workforce and welcome new businesses to relocate here. We also need to provide support for those working alone.

We can grow the sector in two ways: we can nurture what we already have and we can also attract businesses to inwardly locate. The East Sussex natural environment, proximity to Brighton and Hove and to London means that we are in a strong position to attract businesses to locate here.

Many creative industries require little in the way of infrastructure with their supply chains relying on digital connectivity. Consequently creative entrepreneurs are often free to locate themselves where ever they choose as long as that digital connectivity is available. They are likely therefore to select locations based on criteria which constitutes for them quality of life. As long as there is superfast broadband they will choose a place they like. East Sussex response is to be proactive in delivering superfast broadband connectivity across the County and to clearly market the quality of life it can offer its residents and businesses.

Research supports the view that, due to the sector being largely made up of proprietors and SMEs, often with interdependencies between them,

networking is of particular value to this sector. At its most sophisticated some cultural organisations choose to locate in Creative Hubs. In this model businesses and individuals do not just share a building, but ensure there is shared communal space which is programmed to ensure productive interaction between different businesses. This model can be seen in action elsewhere (notably in Brighton where Wired Sussex has initiated a number of creative hubs which have helped them to secure for Brighton and Hove the status of the digital capital of the South East, if not the UK). East Sussex needs to develop environments that enable networks and shared workspace. This is less likely to be a significant land use issue but may require us to be flexible about change of use applications and supporting investment bids to transform existing buildings to meet requirements.

Each sector has some common needs with other sectors and other more tailored requirements. If we are to grow the CCI sector we need to ensure that tailored business support is available and that it is promoted effectively to ensure maximum take up.

With reductions in funding, Universities are now obliged to charge students tuition fees. The impact of this is that young people are obliged to take on student loans and therefore more of them are having to take into account their likely earning power post education as they calculate which degree course to opt for and how they will work their way out of debt. Most creative careers are not well paid and this makes students nervous of taking on creative courses. The net result is that we are in danger of not having a suitably

qualified workforce to help us secure our future as a world leader in creative industries. Small creative businesses looking to grow will also seek suitably qualified and motivated staff. The challenge here is to ensure our education system is nurturing talent and signposting young people to make the right education and career choices to develop talent into earning potential. We also need to ensure that early career opportunities such as apprenticeships and internships are widely available.

The UK's manufacturing economy is shrinking and the skills required of young people coming into employment will increasingly be knowledge based. Creativity affects the way people perform in life and in business, and is recognised as the likely most in-demand attribute for the workforce in the growing knowledge economy. Creativity is multi-sectoral (all products require marketing for instance). The Millburn report of July 2009 identified that young people need positive exposure to the arts in order to consider a career in it.

Studio based artists do better when it comes to accessing financial grants and awards, and are more likely than home based artists to earn over £20k a year" Investing in Creative Industries, A Guide to Local Authorities.

Priority

3



Develop and promote well packaged cultural tourism offers which attract people to East Sussex, raise its profile and attract more visitors and businesses to the County

The Vision

There is a well packaged, clearly signposted, regularly refreshed cultural tourism offer: visitors come to East Sussex because they are confident they will have distinctive and exceptional cultural encounters and they stay longer because of the choice which is on offer.

Strategic Outcome

A thriving and high value visitor economy, with great places to visit and enjoy, and a distinctive county renowned for its natural assets, unique heritage, culture, market and coastal towns.

3.3.1 Where are we now?

East Sussex generally enjoys an outstanding local environment and cultural assets which are some of the key attractions which support the visitor economy in the County. It is described as suffering from poor transport infrastructure although some cultural organisations report turning this to an asset – with visitors to the County finding themselves obliged to experience the cultural offer of the County at a slower pace.

Tourism contributes £115bn to the English economy and as well as attracting visitors to places, the arts encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more in destinations. The 2013 Arts Council England analysis of the economic impact of the Arts identified that £856m per annum of tourist spending can be attributed directly to arts and culture.

A 2011 survey by Tourism South East established that overnight stays in East Sussex were worth £376m to the County with a further £444m earned from day trips. Total income from tourism was £820m. 70% of all visitors to East Sussex came for a holiday (with 17% visiting friends and relatives and 10% coming on business).

Businesses choose to invest in places with a vibrant arts offer because they offer their employees a high quality of life.

Sheffield Park and the Bluebell Railway alone attract 400,000 visitors per year.

We have described some of our most visible players in the description of our cultural offer above, these organisations are perceived as well resourced, securely established – they are our cultural beacons and yet the operating circumstances described under priority one are true for all of them – they all rely heavily on volunteering, work to narrow financial margins, have the burden of capital assets which require constant maintenance and depend on attracting excellent and dedicated personnel despite offering uncompetitive salaries.



Cultural buildings and events (galleries, historic properties, museums, performing arts venues, festivals) encouraging people to visit the County, to stay in our accommodation, buy local produce, eat in our cafes and restaurants. For many people they are the gateway to this County and make East Sussex distinctive. East Sussex organisations feature both as reasons to visit the County and they respond to the County, engaging with people at an appropriate level to celebrate assets, character, history and environment.

3.3.2 Where do we want to be?

The Government recently launched a new tourism strategy. Entitled Delivering a Golden Legacy, it aims to build on the success of the Olympics by increasing the annual number of international visitors to the UK to 40 million by 2020. Heritage and culture are seen as central to this: VisitBritain’s first goal of the strategy is summarised as: Enhance Britain’s image by playing to its strengths such as heritage, traditional and contemporary culture. At the same time, build on the positive perceptions of Britain generated by our year in the global spotlight. The strategy focuses on certain key markets: Brazil, China, France, Germany, the Gulf region, India and the USA.

The East Sussex Economic Development Strategy asserts that “By 2021, East Sussex will boast a thriving and high value visitor economy, renowned for its natural assets, unique heritage, culture,

market and coastal towns.” To do this we must find effective ways to package our offer for visitors and promote it effectively.

We need to increase the visibility of the County as a cultural destination, ensuring that images of our landscape and cultural institutions are marketed widely. We are fortunate in having a significant collection of heritage and arts buildings which are visually distinctive and we need to exploit this effectively to encourage visitors.

To make it easier for tourists to choose East Sussex we need to present well packaged ideas which bring together cultural attractions with other elements such as accommodation, food and drink, walking and cycling and the environment. We need to use networks to combine marketing strategies between cultural organisations.

We also need to use those messages to attract businesses to locate in East Sussex.

East Sussex needs to increase its share of the film location market. By being proactive in attracting companies to film in East Sussex, ensuring they have a good experience when they do film here so they want to come again we not only attract the financial benefits of a film company on location and increase employment opportunities for suitably skilled filmmakers but we also increase the County’s visibility and increase our share of the tourism market.



4. Implementation Plan



There is a ten year time frame for the strategy because the Vision is ambitious. The strategy respects the role that local cultural strategies play in setting direction for locally tailored cultural development. This document seeks to identify those shared priorities which may only be possible by employing a shared approach across the County.

This is a time of diminishing resources, a time where we have to make careful choices about where investment is best placed and ensure that our plans are viable and represent value for money. Having clearly set out our vision, our priorities and our direction of travel this strategy will be used to broker new partnership projects and action plans

which will be refreshed during the lifetime of this strategy.

An event will be held for each priority to identify realistic actions through informed debate which brings together knowledge of the cultural sector, knowledge of the County and knowledge of the resources available.

A partnership group will be formed to “own” the strategy and drive it forward, consisting of representatives from a range of disciplines including but not limited to local government and the cultural sector.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation



The events planned to broker the action plans will also be used as litmus tests to see how well the strategy reflects current circumstances and priorities. The overall revision of this strategy will take place when circumstances shift significantly enough to require a reconsideration of our plans and priorities. Annual reports on progress will be produced.



Appendix I: Background



East Sussex Research Projects

In 2013 East Sussex County Council, in partnership with three East Sussex leading cultural organisations, commissioned three pieces of statement research to inform the development of the cultural strategy:

- an Economic Impact Assessment of Glyndebourne
- an analysis of the Social Capital of the De La Warr Pavilion
- an examination of authentic branding based on Charleston

The research projects can be found here:

- www.glyndebourne.com/glyndebourne-economic-impact-report-2014
- www.dlwp.com/about-us
- www.charleston.org.uk/category/press

East Sussex Strategic Context

Pride of Place, East Sussex Strategic Partnership, 2008 – 2026

- www.essp.org.uk/What-we-do/Pride-of-Place.aspx

Eastbourne Borough Council, Eastbourne Culture: Our Town, Our Communities, our Future; 2011

- www.eastbourne.gov.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=159524

Hastings Borough Council, Cultural Regeneration Strategy 2010 – 2015

- www.hastings.gov.uk/decisions_democracy/how_we_make_decisions/policies_strategies/cultural_regen_strategy

Strategic Framework for Tourism in Wealden 2010 – 2015

- www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Leisure_Tourism_and_Culture/Tourism

Hastings Borough Council, Public Art Strategy 2005

Lewes District Regeneration Strategy 2012 – 2015

- www.lewes.gov.uk/council/15206.asp

Great Cultural Experiences

Why do we Assess Artistic Quality? Arts Council England

- www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/grants-for-the-arts/eligibility/artistic-assessment

Cultural Education

Henley, Darren: Music Education in England – A Review by Darren Henley for the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport; DCMS 2011

- www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/AllPublications/Page11/DFE-00011-2011

Henley, Darren; Cultural Education in England – an Independent Review for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education, DCMS; 2012

- www.culture.gov.uk/publications/8875.aspx

Cultural Impact

O’Brien, Dave, Measuring the value of culture: a report to the Department for Culture Media and Sport, Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2010

- www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/grants-for-the-arts/eligibility/artistic-assessment

Rowson, J. Broome, S. Jones, A; Connected Communities; How social networks power and sustain the Big Society; RSA; 2010

- www.thersa.org/projects/connected-communities/connected-communities-report

BOP Consulting; Measuring the economic benefits of the arts and culture; Arts Council England

- www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/browse-advice-and-guidance/measuring-economic-benefits-arts-culture

Economic Impact Study of UK theatre, Arts Council England 2004

- www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/economic-impact-study-of-uk-theatre

Health

South East Arts in Health Partnership

- www.seah.org.uk

London Arts in Health Forum

- www.lahf.org.uk/categories/research?page=1

No health without mental health: a cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages

London, Department of Health, 2011

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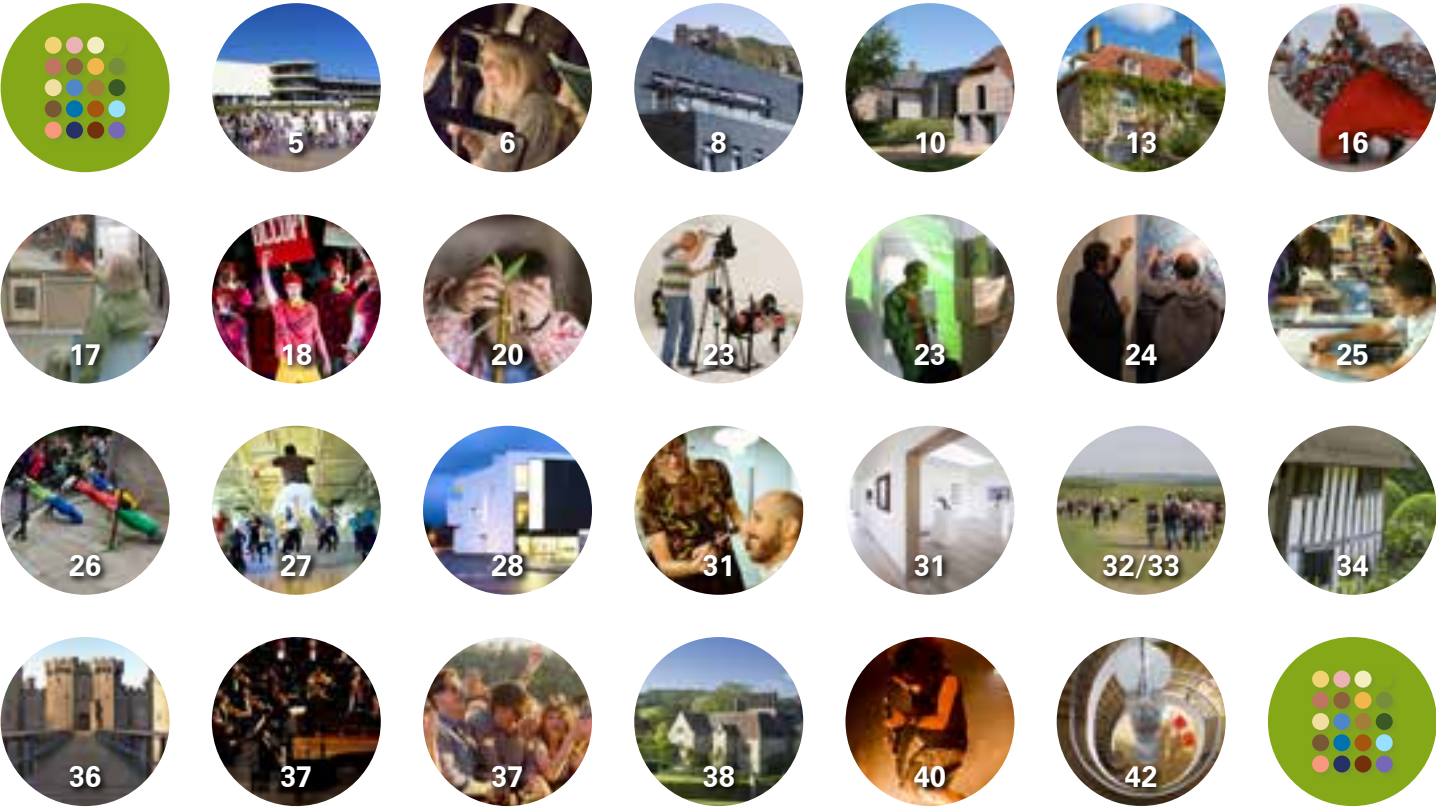
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