



**Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre**  
Cultural Partnership

**Thrills, Spills and  
Unexpected Pleasures**  
A Partnership for Culture

## Introduction

---

The authorities of Blackpool, Wyre, Fylde and Lancashire have been working together on the production and implementation of a cultural strategy as a means of jointly planning how culture and leisure assets and activities should be developed and provided for future generations.

---

The last two years have seen unprecedented upheaval economically, politically and socially. This statement should be seen through this lens. It is a practical response to the new challenges that both the individual authorities and the Fylde Coast have been facing. The document is intended to provide a partnership framework for partners endorsing a belief in the positive role that culture can play across the sub-region and providing a practical response to how authorities can utilise culture and cultural provision.

It sets out a set of principles under which joint work can be carried out and outlines a series of actions designed to develop cultural provision across Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre.





## Vision

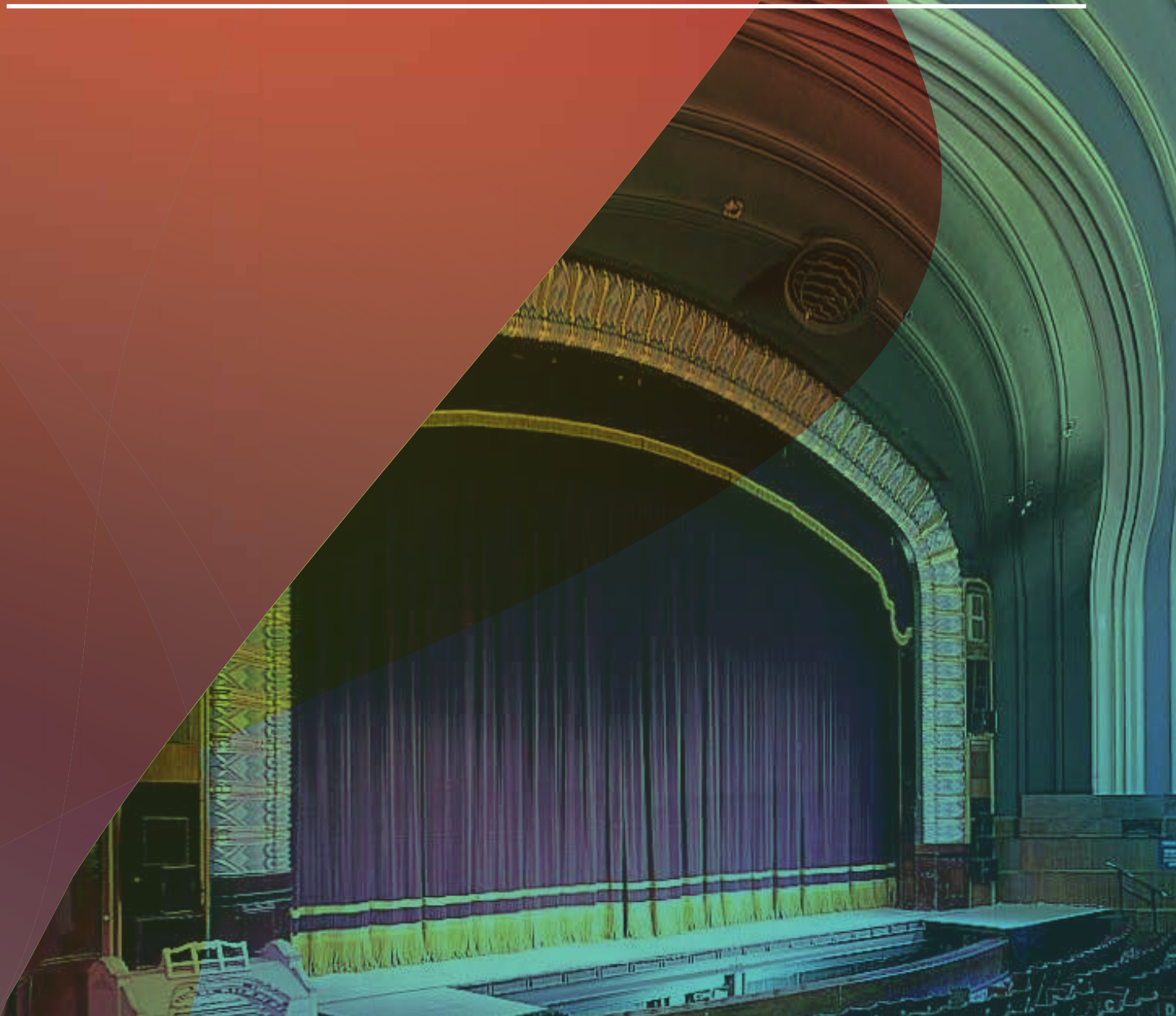
---

Our cultural heritage is based on a grand ambition to provide fun, frolics and fresh air for the masses – whether in the sedate beauty of Lytham, the tranquil greenery of our rural hinterland, or the jaw-dropping energy of Blackpool.

---

In the future, we want Blackpool Fylde and Wyre to be recognised as a leading location for creativity, participation and excellence in cultural activities.

Our cultural life makes the Fylde Coast a great place to work and visit, a place that retains and attracts talent, a place that people are proud to call home.





## Our Culture

---

Our definition of Culture includes the Arts (performing and visual arts, craft, fashion and design), Audio Visual (such as film, radio and television), Children's Play, Heritage, Museums, Libraries and Archives, Natural Environment, Sports and Tourism. Culture is also about belief systems, values and creating positive change.

Culture and the wider creative industries are central to a prosperous future. A vibrant cultural and creative community will:

- drive economic growth, attracting inward investment, developing skills, talent and innovation, creating and sustaining jobs and supporting regeneration;
- contribute significantly to place making, identity and regional tourism;
- encourage community cohesiveness and quality of life, building confidence, aspirations and civic pride.

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre's cultural offer is distinctive and unique. From the bright lights, energy and playfulness of our seaside attractions to the stunning parkland and forests of the rural hinterland, there really is something for everyone. There are assets of international reputation - Royal Lytham and St Annes Golf Course, Blackpool Tower, the Winter Gardens and Blackpool Pleasure Beach, and a diverse range of galas, community events and local clubs. The coast's mass tourism offer and entertainment heritage means that for its size, the area has a remarkable number of leisure and tourism assets and a stronger cultural offer than similar sized places.



## Our Context

---

In an area which contains Blackpool, Lytham St Annes, Kirkham, Fleetwood, Garstang and the Forest of Bowland, each with their own cultural identities and differing needs, there is no escaping the contextual reality that all four partners are operating within. The area does have world-class cultural and natural assets; close proximity and good connectivity with both Manchester and Liverpool, but it also suffers from pockets of intense deprivation, low aspirations and negative perceptions.

Areas of strength include the scale and breadth of the cultural and tourism offer and a developing reputation for developing and executing big ideas such as the Comedy Carpet, national sporting events, and the redevelopment of the Tower and the Winter Gardens.

We are living in an age of austerity. The public sector is facing huge challenges and it has to provide more for less. Budgets across public and private sectors are significantly constrained. Available funding is under pressure and where culture is not a core activity of the funder the long term vision, outlook and investment which the sector requires needs more advocacy. The funding and economic situation is a real threat but it is one of the motivating factors behind this Framework document.

Given this context it would be unrealistic for partners to set out over ambitious plans. We have focused on being practical. Taking small steps and learning to work effectively in partnership is crucial. However, there is both recognition and belief that our advocacy for the role of culture needs to be underpinned by real activity. Consequently, alongside the core set of principles which we are setting out in this document and which will guide our work we have also suggested a pilot piece of activity which would encapsulate our vision around joint working and placing culture and creativity at the heart of what we do.





## Principles For Working Together

---

The principles set out in this document have been informed by a jointly agreed definition of culture and how it can impact on the economy and our communities. The partners realise that the businesses, audiences and communities that we serve don't necessarily recognise administrative boundaries. Our Partnership Framework is intended to provide a joint offer and service that is easy to interact and communicate with.

### 1: Joint working

---

Working together enables us to harness our resources and talents more effectively for residents and visitors alike.

### 2: Culture at the heart of everything we do

---

We firmly believe that culture, creativity and the creative industries make a key contribution to economic growth, social cohesion and wellbeing, and personal development.

### 3: Our approach

---

Our approach to working together is rooted in a respect for individual authority objectives and a commitment to working in partnership wherever possible.

### 4: Commitment to culture

---

We are committed to culture and we will work together both to advocate for continued investment and to ensure that culture has a place in local and regional policy making.

### 5: Mutually-agreed aims

---

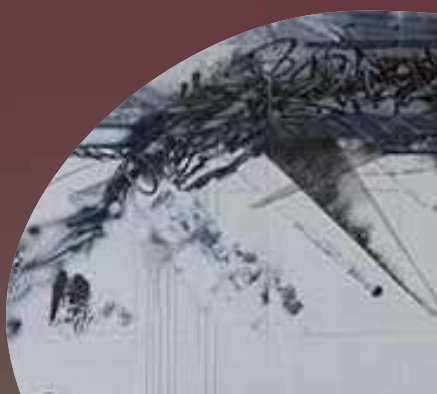
We agree that the partnership's advocacy and joint initiatives should contribute to all or one of the following outcomes:

- building the creative economy (particularly as part of the visitor economy);
- safe, healthy and cohesive communities;
- sustainable and distinctive places;
- confidence, aspirations and civic pride;
- talent, skills and lifelong learning.

### 6: Attracting investment

---

We will work jointly on attracting investment for partnership projects.



# Making It Happen

---

We have agreed to take a three-strand approach to demonstrating clear actions from this Framework for Partnership. These are:

- **Pilot Project - *Bloom*;**
- **Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Cultural Partnership**
- **Cultural Impact Research.**

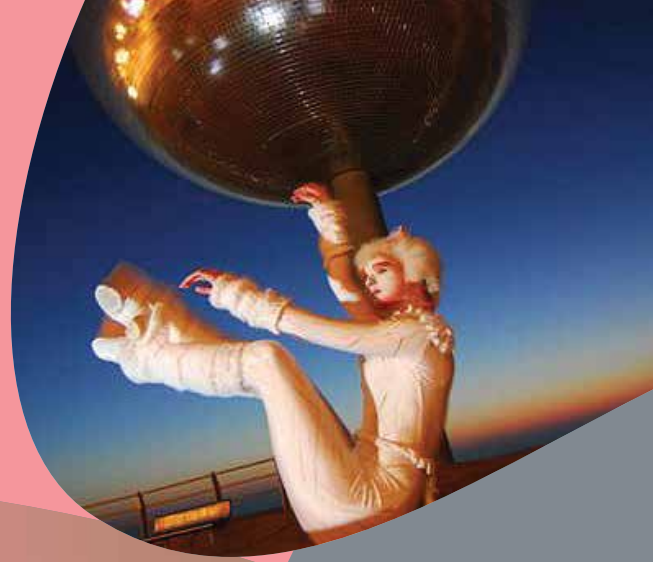
## Pilot Project - Bloom

---

All partners agreed that developing a pilot initiative would allow the partnership to:

- **provide a demonstrable piece of activity that we could build on;**
- **test how we worked together and how effective we are;**
- **provide a real catalyst which would support creating a cultural partnership and our impact research.**

Following a workshop the partnership held with stakeholders from the Fylde coast area, we have decided to further develop a project called Bloom. Bloom is a project that was initially conceived at a workshop with participants from across the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre areas. Bloom is a project that asks artists to respond to the very British tradition and themes of Flower Shows, Victorian Winter Gardens and horticultural exhibitions. A series of Bloom signature events are planned culminating in a finale Artistic Flower Show. The events have been designed to engage local communities and residents as well as attract visitors and press attention.



## Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Cultural Partnership

---

We envisage the Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Cultural Partnership acting as a steering group for culture, bringing together partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors. It should act as a 'critical friend' and test bed for the partners' proposed projects and activities. Furthermore, it is our aim that the Partnership encourage further joint working, and data and idea sharing. Individuals, groups and businesses working in the cultural and creative sector are invited to join, holding a number of events each year and creating a hub for the exchange of ideas and information.

## Cultural Impact Research

---

Our belief that culture and creative industries can drive change and economic and social growth needs to be consistently underpinned by qualitative and quantitative research. The group has agreed to share and pool both resources and data and it is our intention to both commission and publish work that evidences the impact of culture.







## To Find Out More

We hope this Framework will provide stakeholders with a clear idea of the steps that the Fylde Coast partners will be taking, their commitment to both joint working and to advocating for the role of culture as a driver for positive change. We hope that stakeholders will respond enthusiastically to the notion that partnership can lead to greater gains and more efficient use of resources. We also believe that the three strand approach we have set out in this document will lead to further joint working to the benefit of the area as a whole.

Darren Bell  
Cultural Services Manager, Fylde Borough Council  
Tel: 01253 658465  
Email: [darren.bell@fylde.gov.uk](mailto:darren.bell@fylde.gov.uk)

Polly Hamilton  
Head of Culture, Heritage, Libraries and Arts Services,  
Blackpool Council  
Tel: 01253 476155  
Email: [polly.hamilton@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:polly.hamilton@blackpool.gov.uk)

Michael Ryan  
Corporate Director of People and Places,  
Wyre Council  
Tel: 01253 887605  
Email: [michael.ryan@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:michael.ryan@wyre.gov.uk)



Blackpool Council

wyre  
council

