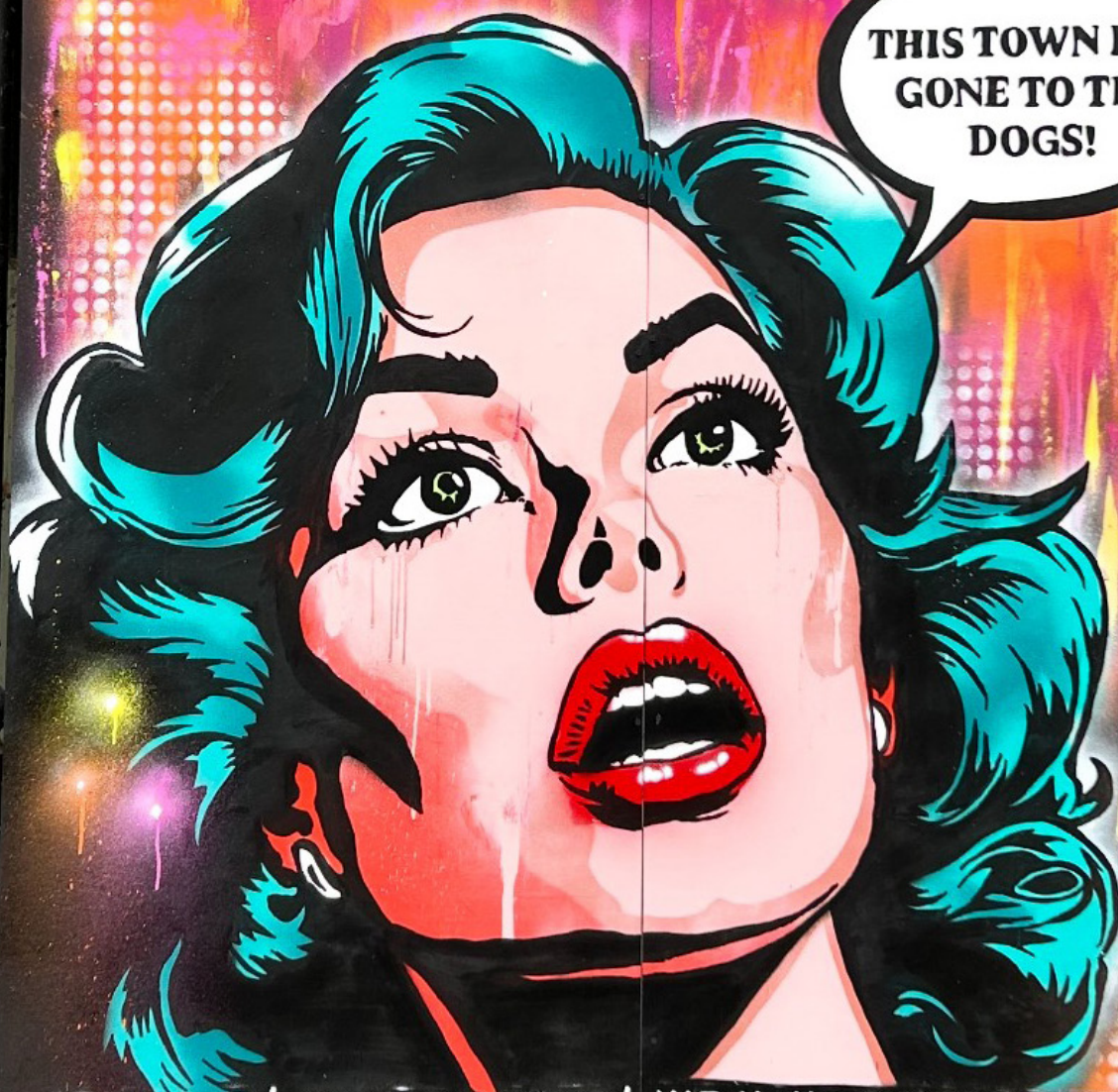


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Newport Culture Strategy 2025-2035

EMPOWERING CULTURE,
TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES



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Foreword

I am proud to introduce Newport's new Culture Strategy, underpinned by an innovative and bold vision that captures the vibrant, diverse, and energetic cultural life of our city. I believe that the arts have a unique power to drive positive social and economic change, and this strategy marks a critical step forward in our shared journey.

Newport's identity is deeply rooted in creativity, resilience, and community spirit. From its historic past as a vital industrial hub to its dynamic contemporary arts scene, Newport has always embraced culture as a core part of what makes us special. Whether it's our thriving music venues, local festivals, the powerful stories of our people, or our talented artists, freelancers and those who work in the creative industries, culture is the heartbeat of Newport, bringing people together and fostering a sense of belonging.

This strategy embodies our collective ambition to harness the transformative power of culture to enhance the lives of everyone who calls Newport home, and to grow the number of people for whom our cultural offer is a reason to visit our brilliant city. We want to leverage cultural opportunities not just for entertainment and inspiration, but as a means to give people (and especially our young people) new skills to pursue fulfilling careers, as a driving force for community cohesion, as an engine of economic growth, and as a source of improved well-being. In Newport, we believe culture is for everyone, and this strategy is our commitment to making culture more inclusive, diverse, and accessible, no matter where you live or what your background.

Our Culture Strategy has been co-created with a wide array of voices, reflecting the rich tapestry of Newport's creative landscape. Many have contributed to shaping its vision - freelance artists, major cultural institutions, local community groups, young people, elected representatives, and more. The priorities outlined in this strategy are a testament to the energy, challenges, and immense potential of Newport as a city ready to embrace and expand its cultural offering.

Our Culture Strategy has been commissioned by Newport City Council, and we are passionate about playing our part in implementing it. But this is not "the Council's" strategy; it belongs to the many brilliant organisations that make up the Newport's cultural offer; and to our partners in health, education, and business; and to our residents. The Council definitely can't do this alone! We all have a part to play so, throughout this strategy "we" means all of us.

My heartfelt thanks go to everyone who contributed their time, ideas, and passion to this endeavour. Your commitment has been invaluable, and together we will ensure Newport continues to grow as a place where culture thrives, creativity is celebrated, and everyone has the opportunity to engage with the arts in meaningful and transformative ways.

Councillor Emma Stowell-Corten
Cabinet Member for Communications and Culture

Case study: Maindee

Community House is a much-loved community centre dedicated to bringing together people of all ages and backgrounds through a wide range of projects and events focused on community cohesion, informal education and multicultural engagement.

Based in Maindee, a vibrant neighbourhood known for its rich diversity and cultural heritage. Community House has thrived for over 50 years with the vital mission of building a strong, connected and peaceful community.

Delivering a range of intergenerational projects, creative activities and cultural events, the centre provides valuable opportunities for residents to connect in a supportive environment.

For example, the five-day-a-week youth project enables children and young people to learn and grow, through music, dance and informal education; whilst the Coffee and Laughs group gives over 50's women a chance to relax, share interests such as arts, crafts and embroidery. Built on an ethos of unity and collaboration the centre has developed strong partnerships in Maindee and beyond.

Maindee Festival

An important highlight of the Maindee's diverse community is the Maindee Festival organised by Maindee Unlimited and Maindee Festival Association. This charity was formed by a group of residents and partner organisations with a shared love for their area.

Maindee Festival an annual celebration of the community's vibrant diversity. Organised in collaboration with Maindee Primary School, Llyfrgell Maindee Library, the festival features music, dance, large scale art pieces, community parade workshops, and food, providing local artists and residents a platform to showcase their talents.

Another notable project is Full Colour Maindee, a community-driven initiative funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, that transforms Maindee, through vibrant public art and creative projects. Local artists, residents, and volunteers collaborate to revitalise the streets with bold murals and bright installations that reflect the area's unique identity and cultural diversity.

Vision, themes, values, and behaviours

Our 10 year Vision

By 2034, Newport will be internationally recognised as a pioneering cultural city, where the spirit of radical inclusivity and accessibility is driven by an unparalleled creative renaissance. Our vision will create a culturally rich ecosystem where barriers to participation are eliminated, allowing all residents and visitors to actively shape the city's cultural narrative. Newport will be celebrated for its bold, unpretentious approach to programming, its seamless integration of culture into public life, and its ability to empower local artists and communities to thrive locally, nationally and globally. We will foster a vibrant, diverse cultural landscape, where the independent arts scene flourishes alongside local, national and international collaborations. By embracing risk-taking and innovation, Newport will redefine what it means to be a cultural destination positioning itself as a beacon of creativity that inspires both residents and visitors. Our city will be known for its inclusive cultural experiences, where people from all walks of life feel a deep connection to the city, its heritage, and its forward-thinking vision.

Key Themes

- *Empowering Local Talent:* Fostering both local and international collaborations
- *Radical Inclusivity and Accessibility:* Creating a space where all voices are heard and barriers to participation are eliminated
- *Risk-taking and Innovation:* Embracing bold ideas and risk in cultural programming
- *Vibrant Cultural Landscape:* Creating a diverse and dynamic cultural environment

Values and Behaviours

Our collective values and behaviours are critical to achieving success. Our five values and the behaviours that manifest them have emerged from vision workshops with stakeholders:

1. “Collaborative”	Behaviour(s)	Success measures
Means...we emphasise the importance of teamwork, open communication, valuing diverse perspectives and fostering a shared culture across sectors and within the Newport community.	<p>Foster teamwork - Actively encourage cross-functional cooperation, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected.</p> <p>Communicate openly and transparently - Share information freely and ensure clear communication across teams.</p> <p>Value input from others - Seek diverse perspectives and leverage the collective intelligence of the group to make decisions.</p> <p>Share credit and success - Recognise the contributions of others and celebrate team achievements, not just individual success.</p> <p>Resolve conflicts constructively - Approach disagreements with empathy and focus on finding mutually beneficial solutions.</p>	<p>Measure the frequency and diversity of cross-sector collaborations through surveys, workshops, and reviews.</p> <p>Assess stakeholder feedback and 360 reviews on effectiveness in collaboration. Encouraging diverse and inclusive participation in problem-solving</p> <p>Track the number of joint initiatives and their outcomes (e.g., shared project deliverables). Celebrating collective achievements rather than individual success</p>
2. “Community focused”	Behaviour(s)	Success measures
Means... we prioritise strengthening the bonds within Newport’s community, ensuring inclusivity (of all kinds reflecting Newport), mutual support, and contributions to broader positive social outcomes	<p>Build connections - Take time to foster genuine relationships and a sense of belonging within the organisation and beyond e.g. intergenerational groups</p> <p>Engage with stakeholders - Actively involve audiences, partners, and community members in decision-making and feedback loops.</p>	<p>Increased community participation in decision-making processes.</p> <p>Actively engaging with stakeholders, particularly underrepresented voices</p> <p>Collaborating with local groups on initiatives that uplift and support Newport’s identity.</p>

	<p>Support and uplift others - Be mentors or coaches, helping others to grow and succeed.</p> <p>Promote culture as an enabler to well-being - promote culture to promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being across the community.</p> <p>Give back - Find ways to contribute to broader societal or local causes, enhancing strategy's role in enhancing the wider community.</p>	<p>Positive feedback on inclusivity and engagement from diverse community groups</p> <p>Tangible impact through participation in local initiatives (e.g., volunteer hours or successful projects enhancing cultural community engagement. Promoting well-being and fostering a sense of belonging within the community</p>
3. "Innovative/Creative"	Behaviour(s)	Success measures
Means - We embrace curiosity and bold thinking, encouraging creativity and adaptability to position Newport as a modern cultural hub	<p>Embrace Curiosity and Experimentation - constantly seek new knowledge, trends, and ideas while encouraging curiosity and imaginative thinking. Foster an environment where testing and learning from failures are celebrated.</p> <p>Challenge Traditional Norms and Think Differently - push boundaries by questioning established practices and embracing disruptive, novel approaches to problem-solving, programming. Blend diverse perspectives to generate fresh solutions.</p> <p>Be Agile and Iterative - stay adaptable in the face of change and continuously refine ideas based on feedback. Rapidly prototype and pivot as needed to align with evolving goals.</p> <p>Encourage Resourcefulness and Fresh Perspectives - leverage diverse inputs, especially from unconventional thinkers and multidisciplinary teams. Find innovative ways to maximise available resources and overcome constraints.</p> <p>Promote Calculated Risk-Taking - create a safe space for bold experimentation, empowering others to take risks and think creatively without fear of failure. Not blame culture – if something fails – learn, iterate and go again.</p>	<p>Number of new creative initiatives launched and implemented successfully - Leveraging Newport's tech scene and cultural diversity for innovative projects</p> <p>Feedback from the community and employees about the environment for innovation.</p> <p>Surveys indicating alignment with the organisational vision.</p> <p>Visible progress in achieving long-term goals, such as infrastructure or cultural shifts.</p> <p>Personal growth/upskilling metrics like training participation or community leadership roles.</p>

	Stay Ahead of Trends - actively explore and anticipate emerging opportunities, technologies, and cultural movements to maintain a forward-thinking edge.	
4. “Transformational”	Behaviour(s)	Success measures
Means - We focus on creating long-lasting, systemic changes that empower individuals and drive Newport’s vision of becoming a vibrant, future-forward city	<p>Pursue long -term impact - Focus on creating lasting change rather than short -term wins, aiming for deeper, systemic improvements.</p> <p>Lead with vision - Inspire others our clear, compelling vision for the future, motivating Newport communities to embrace, drive and be advocates for change.</p> <p>Embrace change wholeheartedly - Be an active agent of transformation, encouraging others to embrace disruption and adapt to new realities.</p> <p>Empower others to grow - Create opportunities for personal and professional development, ensuring individuals and organisations can evolve alongside the change the cultural strategy will bring</p> <p>Measure progress - Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of change initiatives and adjust strategies/tactics to keep progress on track.</p>	<p>Number of new creative initiatives launched and implemented successfully</p> <p>Embracing new ideas and experimenting without fear of failure. Not blame culture – if something fails – learn, iterate and go again</p> <p>Feedback from the community and employees about the environment for innovation.</p> <p>Regular iteration of ideas based on learning cycles (e.g., agile reviews).</p>
5. “Radical Inclusivity”	Behaviours	Success measures
Means...We are committed to creating a welcoming space for everyone, breaking down barriers to ensure that all voices are heard and valued. This inclusivity is not just a goal but a foundational principle that shapes Newport’s identity as an	<p>Intentional Outreach - Proactively engage marginalised and underrepresented communities, inviting their voices and contributions into Newport’s cultural activities and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Adaptive Accessibility Measures - Continuously evaluate and improve physical, social, and economic accessibility, ensuring that venues, events, and programs are inclusive for</p>	<p>Engaged Marginalised Communities - Conduct quarterly community consultations with underrepresented groups, with a target of engaging at least five new community partners annually.</p> <p>Increased Accessibility implement and assess accessibility improvements across cultural venues annually, targeting an increase in the participation</p>

open, accessible, and community-focused cultural city.	<p>all people, regardless of ability, background, or economic status.</p> <p>Community Partnerships – Encourage and support partnerships with local organisations that serve diverse communities to build culturally relevant programs that resonate with all residents, promoting a sense of belonging and shared ownership of Newport’s cultural life.</p>	<p>rate of individuals with disabilities or from low-income backgrounds each year.</p> <p>Lasting Partnerships - Form partnerships with new community organisations each year, tracking participation and satisfaction in co-designed programs</p>
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Case study: Ballet Cymru

Founded in 1986, Ballet Cymru is an award-winning professional ballet company based in Rogerstone. The company's vision of 'extraordinary ballet at the heart of a creative nation' cements their role as the national ballet company of Wales, based outside Cardiff and with a core of 10 international dancers. The company's focus is to challenge traditional boundaries and expectations through an inclusive, innovative and inspiring ethos, which has won many awards, including a nomination as Best UK Mid-scale Dance Company at the 2022 Theatre Critics Circle Awards. The company represents Wales and Newport all over the world and has toured to New York, Italy, Bermuda and China.

Ballet Cymru produce full length productions with top creative professionals that tour throughout Wales, the UK and beyond. The company average a paying audience of 8-10000 people each year reaching virtually every major venue in Wales. Its long-term work at the Riverfront in Newport produces 4 main stage performances, 3 studio theatre performances and two weeks of Summer Dance outreach annually.

Ballet Cymru are at the forefront of inclusion in ballet in the UK. Projects like *Stuck in the Mud and Dance Unstuck* pioneer disability in dance and continue to develop methodology and pedagogy of ballet training for disabled dancers.

Ballet Cymru's engagement programme supports access for dance for young people all over Wales as well as working in a variety of care settings. The company has 136 young Associate Dancers from Newport and all over Wales. 'Duets' is a national dance training programme supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation since 2012, providing 216 scholars and ambassadors each year with free tuition, mentoring, and support throughout Wales. Duets is working in 8 Welsh schools (including three in Newport). Ballet Cymru reaches an average of 15,000 education participants annually.

Ballet Cymru continues to produce outstanding and innovative work and is becoming widely recognised for its ground-breaking attitude to diversity and inclusion in ballet. In 2022 the company attained its long-term goal of becoming Independent Theatre Council Ethical Employers. It is a Revenue client of the Arts Council of Wales and company Patrons include Cerys Matthews and Catrin Finch.

CASE STUDY - Menter Iaith Casnewydd: Promoting the use of the Welsh language across Newport

Menter Iaith Casnewydd is a registered charity dedicated to enabling and promoting the use of Cymraeg (Welsh) throughout the county of Newport. With a rich history of Cymraeg in Newport, 9.3% of the county's population speaks Welsh. Menter Iaith Casnewydd is committed to fostering its use across the county's diverse communities, ensuring that Cymraeg is seen, heard, and used every day, helping it to flourish in Newport.

Menter Iaith Casnewydd is eager to see children having fun in Cymraeg outside the classroom. Whether through after-school clubs, trips, or monthly Hwyl i'r Teulu (Fun for the Family) events, their goal is to give kids the confidence to enjoy Cymraeg in every aspect of their lives. They provide resources and organise events specifically for Newport families, enabling parents to actively participate in their children's education. Their aim is to encourage families to use Cymraeg together at home.

They empower young people to shape Wales' future through various partnerships and a range of events and activities. By enabling young people to use and celebrate Cymraeg daily, they nurture community ties and cultural pride, actively contributing to a thriving bilingual society.

They open doors for both learners of Cymraeg and fluent speakers. By organising specific events designed for people at all levels within the community, they aim to boost everyone's confidence, allowing Cymraeg to flourish outside the classroom in social and casual settings. Both in-person and online activities include a weekly Clwb Darllen (reading club), Grŵp Sgwrsio (talking group), Cerdded a Chlonc (walk and talk), and Clwb Coffi (coffee club), among others.

Since 2018, they have hosted the Gŵyl Newydd Festival, Newport's Welsh-language arts and cultural festival. This family-friendly event offers a fun environment where attendees can hear and use Cymraeg while enjoying music, crafts, stalls, and workshops. The festival celebrates Newport's Welshness and regularly attracts over 500 attendees. All schools in the city participate, performing in Cymraeg on the main stage and showcasing their Welsh language talents and skills.

Newport

Newport, with our rich tapestry of history, industry, and cultural diversity, is both a literal gateway to Wales and a broader cultural and economic passage to the wider world. Our position, industrial legacy, and growing creative industries, show a city embracing both its historical roots and a dynamic future.

A Diversity of Cultures

Newport's cultural diversity is one of its most defining features. The city is home to a rich blend of languages, with English and Welsh as official languages and many community languages spoken by its residents. This multicultural fabric is woven into the very essence of Newport's neighbourhoods, influencing everything from cuisine to festivals.

The city's artistic scene reflects this cultural variety, with local artists often drawing inspiration from the many stories and backgrounds of Newport's residents. We are home to a burgeoning community of creatives who are reimagining what it means to be Welsh in the 21st century, blending traditional influences with contemporary expressions.

A Rich Historical Landscape

Newport's history is interwoven with that of the broader Gwent region, encompassing centuries of significant events and developments. The ancient Roman settlement of Caerleon offers a glimpse into Newport's deep historical roots. Caerleon, is one of the most significant Roman sites in Britain with its well-preserved amphitheatre and Roman baths, which has huge potential for cultural tourism and education. Since 2002, the discovery of the remarkable Newport Medieval Ship has also helped us reconnect with our pre-industrial trading history.

The city's legacy of social and political activism is another cornerstone of our identity. Newport played a significant role in the 19th century Chartist campaign for political reform, which culminated in the 1839 uprising. We honour this legacy celebrating Newport's contribution to the struggle for democracy and workers' rights. This spirit of activism continues today, reflected in local initiatives and community projects that champion inclusivity and social justice.

Newport's historic development is deeply tied to our industrial past, primarily driven by iron, coal, and steel, and our city's landscape bears many reminders of this era, most notably the iconic Grade I listed Transporter Bridge. One of only eight remaining in the world, this striking structure is a symbol of Newport's resilience and innovation, a testament to the engineering prowess that shaped the city, not just a historical artifact but a beloved cultural landmark. The recently finished visitor centre is helping to repurpose and celebrate the bridge as a tourist destination. Beyond the bridge, Newport's docks and former industrial sites are undergoing revitalisation, blending the old with the new.

The Artistic Renaissance of Newport: Music and Visual Arts

Newport's reputation in the arts dates back decades. In the 1990s, the city gained the moniker '*the new Seattle*' for its vibrant music scene, drawing comparisons to the famous grunge scene of the American city. Iconic venues like TJ's, once hailed as some of the best live music venues in the world, hosted emerging bands that went on to achieve international fame. This musical legacy includes musicians from Newport such as Feeder and Benji Webb (of Skindred) as well

as Joe Strummer (of The Clash) who was educated at Newport Art School, and a lineage of successful artists, filmmakers, and musicians who continue to shape the cultural landscape. Newport's revered bands, gigs and venues have sent generations into the night with their ears ringing.

Today, Newport's music scene remains strong with new venues and festivals celebrating the city's musical heritage while introducing new contemporary sounds. The city's many grassroots music promoters, ensures local talent has a platform to thrive.

The superb facilities of The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre and the new 500-capacity Corn Exchange live music and events space, complement a range of smaller music, arts, cultural, and community spaces such as Le Pub, The Place, and the CAB which offer excellent potential for growing and nurturing grassroots talent. The city is also a venue for unique annual arts and culture festivals such as Art on The Hill, Big Splash (the UK's largest free outdoor theatre festival), Pride in the Port, Gŵyl Newydd Festival, and Reggae and Riddim.

Visual arts also play a significant role in Newport's cultural offering. The Newport Museum and Art Gallery, one of the oldest institutions in Wales, houses a diverse collection of art, artifacts, and exhibitions that celebrate both local and international artists. Caerleon is home to remarkable Roman collections. Our public art scene is equally vibrant, with works like the iconic *Wave* sculpture symbolising the city's connection to its industrial and maritime heritage.

Fostering a Creative Future

The city's investment in the creative industries is part of a broader strategy to drive economic growth and urban regeneration. Newport is also increasingly seen as a 'data city,' positioning ourselves as a hub for digital technologies and innovation following the formation of the world's first semiconductor cluster, fintech and creative industry sectors. We have embraced digital culture and are seeing a growing number of tech startups and creative enterprises.

Newport's educational institutions, including the University of South Wales' creative arts programmes, are also integral to our vision, equipping students with the skills needed to excel particularly in the digital age. Meanwhile, cultural venues like The Riverfront Theatre and Arts Centre provide a dynamic space for performances, exhibitions, and creative workshops, fostering a new generation of artists and creators.

Newport's creative economy is aided by excellent transport links on the M4 motorway and main line railway linking Swansea, Cardiff, Bristol and London, and within easy reach of Cardiff and Bristol airports.

Connecting to Nature and the Wider Region

Newport's cultural vibrancy is complemented by our stunning natural surroundings. The city is part of the Gwent Levels, a unique wetland landscape that offers rich biodiversity and a haven for wildlife enthusiasts. The nearby Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal and Newport's ornamental parks provide picturesque settings for outdoor activities, attracting both tourists and locals seeking adventure or tranquillity in nature.

The city's coastline, part of an internationally recognised area, adds to Newport's appeal as a destination for eco-tourism and environmental education. These natural assets not only enhance the quality of life for Newport's residents but also offer numerous opportunities for cultural events, outdoor festivals, and heritage trails that celebrate the region's natural beauty.

A City Poised for a Cultural Renaissance

Rooted in our history, but not tied down by it, Newport is creative, gritty, and fun.

As we look to the future, our blend of industrial heritage, cultural diversity, and creative innovation position us as a city ready for a cultural renaissance. Our vision for the future is rooted in a commitment to inclusivity, creativity, and community cohesion. With a thriving arts scene, a growing digital economy, and a strong connection to our past, Newport is well-placed to continue its transformation into a vibrant cultural hub.

We are a city on the move, where history and modernity intersect, and where the arts, heritage, and creative industries are at the heart of a bold new chapter in our story.

CASE STUDY: CELF - Caerleon Arts Festival

Since birth in 2003, the Festival has blossomed into an all year round celebration of arts and entertainment at venues in the historic setting of Caerleon (Roman fortress town, medieval castle, legendary capital of King Arthur). Events include choirs; Christmas Market and Spring Fair; Hen Galan – a celebration of the Welsh New Year with Mari Lwyd and musicians; St. David's Day with music and song ; and a Summer Festival of eleven days duration including Shakespeare in the Roman Amphitheatre; a literary weekend with authors and poets; concerts; and 'The Big Free Weekend' – over fifty bands and performers on both banks of the River Usk and arts/crafts/exhibitions/sculptors and entertainment on the Festival Meadow – a former field transformed into a wildflower meadow by festival volunteers.

The Festival demands considerable dedication on the part of unpaid volunteers. It is a Festival managed by the community for the community, but its appeal attracts performers and visitors from afar. Goodwill on the part of all – volunteers, partners, sponsors, performers, exhibitors and the community is the key to its success.

Newport in data

Economic Context

- Over 5,000 creative industry jobs including freelancers
- £330m creative industries GVA per annum
- £400m creative business turnover per annum
- 265 creative enterprises (5% of all those in the sector in Wales)
- The fastest creative sector growth in Wales between 2015-2022 at 125%

Population

- Wales' third largest city and fastest growing
- Newport has 160,000 people across 66,000 households
- Significantly younger than Wales – 64% aged under 50
- More ethnically, nationally and religiously diverse than Wales - 12% were born outside the UK and there is a large Asian community.

Cultural Engagement

- Over 40 cultural venues (e.g. arts centres, libraries, museums, galleries, theatres, music venues), 14 recording/rehearsal studios, and four creative workspace (e.g., office/studio/co-working) hubs.
- 83.5% of people see Newport as a place where people can actively enjoy and engage in creative and cultural activities
- 62% feel they have the opportunity to take part in the activities that they want to
- 38% of people engage moderately with culture (*Dormitory Dependables* and *Trips and Treats* in the Audience Agency's Audience Spectrum)
- 41% on average attend pop/rock concerts and 39% theatre each year.
- 75% of people went to the cinema at least once in the past year

Policy context

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act recognises the importance of cultural well-being in improving the lives of people. One of the central goals of the Act is to create ‘A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language’.

As we develop our Culture Strategy, a new Culture Strategy is also being forged for the nation of Wales - one that seeks to bring people together through culture, to promote and celebrate Welsh language and identity, and to build a resilient and sustainable cultural sector.



Locally, the main goal of Newport City Council’s Corporate Plan for 2022-2027 is to create “an ambitious, fairer, greener Newport for everyone” with four wellbeing objectives that will support this:

- **Objective 1 – Economy, education and skills:** Newport is a thriving and growing city that offers excellent education and aspires to provide opportunities for all.
- **Objective 2 – Environment and infrastructure:** A city that seeks to protect and enhance our environment whilst reducing our carbon footprint and preparing for a sustainable and digital future.
- **Objective 3 – Quality social care and community services:** Newport is a supportive city where communities and care are at the heart of what we do.
- **Objective 4 – An inclusive, fair and sustainable council:** Newport City Council is an inclusive organisation that places social value, fairness and sustainability at its core.

Culture has a vital role to play in supporting these, and many other aspects of local life. Our strategy will support these priorities by helping to provide:

- An excellent education and skills offer with more and diverse opportunities for people.
- Better jobs, more inclusive economic growth leading to prosperous and resilient communities.
- Improved heritage and natural environmental protection and enhancement with the right skills and knowledge.
- Promoting a sustainable and digital future.
- Improved social cohesion pride and sense of place.
- Improved health and wellbeing through access to cultural opportunities, programming, enrichment and the Welsh language, in both social and community settings.
- Increased tourism, visitor and night-time economy and greater ‘soft power’ on the national stage.

Culture has already successfully been embedded across policies and strategies from Wales, and we have been guided by priorities on:

1. **Environmental Resilience** – sustainable building design; careful adaptation to climate change, preservation and conservation; new recreational green spaces; and awareness and engagement through cultural content.

2. **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion** – inclusive histories locally and nationally; appropriate representation of minority ethnic cultures; diverse and accessible opportunities to live, play and work; and tackling barriers to access through targeted experiences, support and cultural democracy.
3. **Education** – supporting enrichment programmes (e.g., volunteering), curriculum development (e.g., conservation) and skills and employability programmes.
4. **Welsh Language** - increasing opportunities to learn, use and share Welsh language and culture through venues, programmes events and services.
5. **Community Development** – collaborating in the cultural strategy development process and delivery, longer-term decision-making and creating an enhanced offer overall that celebrates heritage, bilingualism and fosters pride in place.
6. **Heritage** – a broader approach (tangible and intangible) that supports both local people (skills, pride in place), and visitor economy, and which embraces innovation, partnership and sustainability in management and interpretation.

How we did this

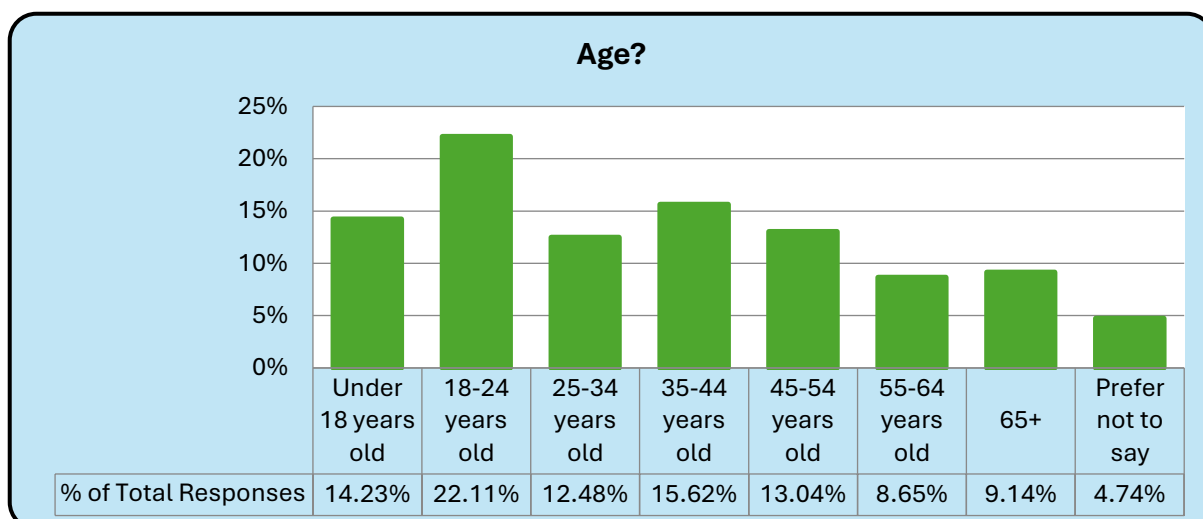
This strategy has been informed by an extensive programme of research and engagement, led by leading cultural strategists, Counterculture Partnership. Their work was overseen by the Newport Cultural Strategy Steering Group, which brings together the city's cultural leaders and stakeholders, chaired by the Council's Cabinet Member for Culture and Communications. The Steering Group will also be responsible for overseeing the successful delivery of the strategy.

Work began in Spring 2024 with an in-depth review of existing data and literature to assess our cultural assets, stories, people and potential – as well as the main risks, issues, gaps and weaknesses that the city faces. We considered the policies, strategies and other factors influencing culture, heritage, and the creative economy in Newport - now and in future. We also looked at other successful towns and cities around the UK to see what lessons we could learn from their experiences.

Counterculture supplemented this research through a series of one-to-one and group discussions with representatives of Newport's cultural organisations, artists, creative practitioners, businesses, and community groups as well as other key stakeholders including Welsh Government, Cadw, Arts Council Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru, and the National Trust. These conversations culminated in a visioning workshop with representatives from across the city's creative and cultural sector in early September.

To ensure city-wide adoption and success of the strategy, we recognised the importance of engaging with the wider public and listening to their feedback – all those people who live, work or study in Newport, as well as those who visit the city (and, importantly, those who don't!). We conducted a series of surveys in English and Welsh, both online and offline, to which over 2,000 people responded, representing a broad cross section of Newport society. We asked what cultural activities people currently engage in, where and how often, what they would like to do more of, and what was stopping them doing so. We asked how they currently get information about what's going on locally, and how they would like to get it in future.

We spoke to people on the streets, and at events like Big Splash. We ran workshops with local partners including Reality Theatre, Race Council Cymru, LUDEK, Community House and Newport Youth Services. We used arts, crafts, drama activities and ran a 'rap and rhyme' session with former Children's Laureate of Wales, Connor Allen and Manchester-based rapper, Kurtis Reed. We talked to children and young people to the Polish community, Welsh speaking community, and the over-60s. We encouraged the citizens of Newport to explore what creativity and culture means to them, what *they* most want to see from the new strategy, and to help co-design a bold new cultural vision for the city.



Age profile of the over 2,000 respondents to our surveys.



Word cloud – our hopes for culture in Newport by our Coffee and Laughs (older people's) group.

Our priorities

Newport's cultural life is diverse, fun, and welcoming.

This strategy seeks to build on the many amazing things that are already happening – artists creating outstanding work, community groups bringing people together across the city, our heritage being preserved and explained, creative businesses utilising new technologies to bring jobs and joy, and arts organisations delivering fantastic music, literature, productions, programmes and events.

Our four priorities are ones that Newport City Council and our partners will focus on to help us develop a sustainable, equitable cultural sector that provides opportunities for everyone and lets everyone know what those opportunities are, so that our residents and visitors can enjoy our brilliant city together.

Priority 1: Newport - a *destination* for culture

Summary: *We want Newport to be seen, through the lens of our culture, as a diverse and dynamic city. We will invest in our cultural assets and work across sectors to ensure those assets are fully utilised. We will grow audiences across different art forms, festivals, and events with more visitors and residents taking part. Culture will be a key consideration in our regeneration projects, and in raising Newport's international profile.*

Our creative sector will grow as cultural influencers and the wider public increasingly think of Newport through the lens of our diverse, energetic culture. Our creative sector will thrive as leaders across sectors value the contribution of culture to the city in wellbeing, placemaking, and the economy.

From having one of only three permanent Roman legionary fortresses in Britain to being the 1990s centre of European alt-rock and grunge music, Newport has an eclectic and fascinating cultural history and, today, boasts a wide range of assets that enable people to produce, participate in and enjoy all sorts of cultural activities. Amongst the 84 cultural assets identified in preparing this Culture Strategy key assets include:

- Roman, medieval, and industrial history sites and collections.
- Performance venues of different capacities and types, including the CAB and International Convention Centre.
- Arts centres and other mixed-use cultural buildings spaces including The Dolman Theatre and Barnabas Arts House.
- Recording and rehearsal spaces.
- Artist studios.

Our *Destination* priority will seek to make the most of these assets, drawing our cultural offer together into a coherent whole, and focussing on our strengths to provide excellence for our visitors and civic pride for our residents.

Priority 1: Destination – Outcomes

Outcome 1: Our historic sites, cultural buildings, and public realm assets will be well maintained, financially sustainable, and intensively used for public benefit. With our partners we will deliver cultural assets which meet the requirements of Newport's creative communities and attract increasing numbers of visitors.

Outcome 2: Newport's cultural offer will be proactively marketed, play an increasing part in tourism and draw visitors from across Wales and the world with positive impacts on Newport's economy.

Outcome 3: Newport will have a coherent and focussed programme of cultural events, some of which will develop an increasing national and international profile and come to be part of the city's identity.

Outcome 4: Large-scale regeneration in Newport will seek to integrate culture and heritage into major residential and commercial developments.

Priority 1: *Destination* - Actions and Success Measures

Outcome	Action	Success Measures
<p>Outcome 1: Our historic sites, cultural buildings, and public realm assets will be well maintained, financially sustainable, and intensively used for public benefit. We will deliver cultural assets which meet the requirements of Newport's creative communities and attract increasing numbers of visitors.</p>	<p>Seek agreement across sector to prioritise maintenance works and improvements that lead to greater financial sustainability and lower carbon emissions where funding is available rather than new venues.</p> <p>Develop and maintain an accessible list of creative spaces that makes it simpler for organisers of workshops, pop-ups, and community activities to understand where they can hold events.</p> <p>Create a heritage action plan so that stakeholders and funders have a clear understanding of our priorities for heritage asset care, interpretation and audiences.</p> <p>Develop a long term strategy for the storage and display of the medieval ship and consider whether this venue could be shared with other museum/gallery assets or cultural activities.</p> <p>Develop a feasibility study into better utilisation of existing spaces to provide a wider range of music venues.</p> <p>Recognising that there are a number of performance and gallery spaces in the city centre these should review their programmes and offer to ensure they most effectively serves the wider goals of the Culture Strategy.</p>	<p>Reduction in direct CO2 emissions by cultural organisations operating venues in Newport measured principally through gas/electricity consumption data.</p> <p>Increasing proportion of audiences use public transport to reach venues and events – measured through audience surveys.</p> <p>Creative spaces for hire list accessible through web site.</p> <p>Heritage action plan produced and integrated into cultural strategy.</p> <p>Strategic Outline Case produced for ship.</p> <p>Feasibility study for mid-scale music produced.</p> <p>Review of Riverfront theatre including detailed stakeholder consultation completed.</p>

<p>Outcome 2: Newport's cultural offer will play an increasing part in tourism and draw visitors from across Wales and the world with positive impacts on Newport's economy.</p>	<p>Input to the new Destination Management Plan to ensure it reflects the significant role of cultural tourism and that its priorities align with those of the Culture Strategy.</p> <p>Working with Visit Wales to market internationally those elements of Newport's heritage and culture most appealing to overseas visitors.</p> <p>Encourage all venues to engage in regular collection of postcode data for visitors/audiences to develop a better understanding of the visitor profile and more effective marketing.</p> <p>Through our developing cultural networks encourage cross-promotion, development of joint ticketing and other incentives to visit and dwell.</p> <p>Explore Coach Friendly City status and other tourism accreditations that will aid cultural organisations in marketing their offer to the visitor economy.</p> <p>Develop Cultural Tourism Itineraries: Newport has a cohort of qualified White Badge Guides, we will work with them to create and promote themed travel itineraries (e.g., historical Newport, modern art tour, Welsh heritage) to guide tourists through a curated experience of the city's cultural assets.</p> <p>Utilise the Visitor Centre at the reopened Transporter Bridge as an effective signposting centre for other cultural assets, events, exhibitions, and performances.</p>	<p>New DMP includes significant cultural tourism elements and aligns with culture strategy.</p> <p>Increasing international tourism to Newport as reported by venue surveys and other mechanisms.</p> <p>Audience postcode collection widespread across Newport venues and events and used to inform decision making in organisations.</p> <p>Explore Coach Friendly City and other relevant accreditations.</p> <p>Itineraries and trails for different visitor preferences easily accessible from website and prominent in visitor offer.</p> <p>Transporter Bridge visitor centre meets footfall targets.</p>
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<p>Outcome 3: Newport will have a coherent and focussed programme of cultural events, some of which will develop an increasing national and international profile and come to be part of the city's identity.</p>	<p>Develop a centralised calendar of events in collaboration with cultural organisations to avoid overlap and maximize audience reach.</p> <p>Couple this with a wider website review to include ensuring national partners' (e.g., Cadw, National Trust, Amgueddfa Cymru) opportunities are represented and there are clear links to place marketing and branding.</p> <p>Investment in signature events: Big Splash is one of the biggest free arts festival in Wales and has an authentic Newport 'vibe', Focus on growth of audience numbers and reputation amongst performers/artists across Wales/UK.</p> <p>Support new and emerging events with offers of mentorship from experienced professionals and signposting to funding opportunities.</p>	<p>Events calendar available on website and widely used by sector.</p> <p>Recognised place brand evaluated as successful by both VE and culture sectors. National partners events and offer feature alongside local organisations.</p> <p>Big Splash continues to grow visitor numbers, particularly from outside Newport and overnight visitors.</p> <p>New events offered regularly, with some becoming established over several years.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Large-scale regeneration in Newport will seek to integrate culture and heritage into major residential and commercial developments.</p>	<p>Utilising the culture team's place within the Council's Regeneration and Economic Development we will seek to provide access for the cultural sector to a developer's forum which is attended by city leaders, developers, planners, architects and others. As part of this we will seek to develop mentoring opportunities across sectors to improve engagement.</p>	<p>Major development sites within the city incorporate cultural elements including community spaces, public art, play, or other elements in line with Placemaking Plan.</p> <p>Some new developments considered exemplars of good practice (e.g., win awards).</p>

Case study: Living Levels Partnership



(Image Copyright Angelina Barnett, Coleg Gwent Illustration Student – taken from Living Levels website <https://www.livinglevels.org.uk/illustrators>)

The Living Levels Partnership brings together a wide range of stakeholders to recapture, enhance and celebrate the amazing Gwent Levels landscape, which covers 140 square kilometres between the hills of South Wales and the Severn Estuary and reaches over 1 million people – a third of Wales. One of the key partners is Newport City Council.

Since 2014, with grants from the National Lottery Heritage fund and the Rural Communities Development Fund, over £4m has been invested in the Levels landscape. This includes a range

of artistic commissions and projects, including several with students from the local Coleg Gwent. Living Levels improves visitor experience and works with local communities to showcase the wildlife and heritage of the landscape and understand issues which are important to them, delivering a programme which makes a difference to local people.

Partnership work has included co-commissioning events, such as the Tin Shed Theatre Co. community production of Moby Dick on the Newport Transporter Bridge in 2018, a series of sculptures in public spaces celebrating the people of the Levels, new Levels-focussed displays at Newport Museum and Caerleon Roman Museum, more than 240 events and activities with over 16,000 attendees, and an oral history project recording the voices of local people.

Big Skies was a three year project that reunited people from the city with the rural landscape that surrounds them. Tin Shed Theatre Co., in collaboration with Living Levels, created a portfolio of events that spanned the Levels from Chepstow to Cardiff. Events included theatre, such as a production of Moby Dick on the Newport Transporter Bridge, public art, and community workshops, that aimed to rekindle peoples' connection to the landscape by inviting people to participate, witness and create beautiful things.

Living Levels Partnership works particularly to reach smaller rural communities and involve artists with their concerns. They partner with many cultural organisations, including a number of those based in and around Newport.

Priority 2: Newport - *communities creating culture*

Summary: Newport is a diverse and growing city where different cultures and communities create opportunities for exciting and varied cultural expressions in various neighbourhoods. This helps reduce loneliness, integrate communities, and improve well-being and health. We recognise that everyone in Newport contributes to our culture. By supporting those who have previously been marginalised to create, lead, and participate, we ensure that everyone has the opportunity to celebrate our culture.

Compared with Wales as a whole, the population of Newport is significantly younger (64% aged under 50 compared with 58% nationally), more ethnically, nationally and religiously diverse with significantly more people who are born outside the UK (12% vs 7% nationally), more likely to live with dependent children (30% vs 26% nationally) and more likely to be in full-time employment (56% vs 52% nationally). Our population is ever-changing, and we are committed to enhancing our understanding of our communities as they continue to grow and develop. Our ambition is to ensure that everybody in Newport can access high-quality culture in varied forms, and that resident's health and wellbeing is improved as we widen participation in culture. Everyone in Newport should feel comfortable taking part, trying out new activities and developing their own creative skills. We will be particularly focussed on ensuring that young people from all backgrounds have access to the arts and culture.

Cultural engagement is significantly enhanced where people feel that they are included in decision-making and leadership. We are committed to seeing increased diversity in the cultural leadership of our city, and to continuing to develop our collaborative co-creation approach to cultural projects.

A rich variety of voluntary and community groups work incredibly hard, largely sustained by volunteers, to deliver rich cultural experiences across many different art forms. These include community centres such as Newport Sudanese Community and Duffryn Community Centre and the friends' groups supporting the parks, museums and heritage venues. The Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations which supports community groups and provides resources for volunteering, and the Community Connectors Scheme.

Our artists and creatives also play a critical part in ensuring that the benefits of culture reach into people's daily lives. Our artists are rooted in neighbourhoods across the city and across the creative sector we work with partners from health, education and other sectors to deliver creative programmes that shape Newport for the better.

The cultural and creative sector plays a crucial role in helping Newport achieve our goal of increasing the number of Welsh speakers from the current 7.5% of the population. By raising awareness and enhancing the visibility of the Welsh language across all communities, we aim to foster a vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape where Welsh is celebrated and spoken more widely.

We will leverage the power of cultural activities to introduce Welsh in engaging and approachable ways. Our aim is to encourage familiarity and the use of incidental Welsh words through a blend of digital and in-person events, temporary and permanent signage and interpretation, exhibitions, and music.

Priority 2: *Community* – Outcomes

Outcome 5: All communities in Newport will see increases in cultural participation and access to cultural activities will be improved for groups with a variety of different needs.

Outcome 6: Participating in culture will result in improved health and wellbeing for Newport residents.

Outcome 7: The Welsh language will be used increasingly in our cultural offer and valued as a critical part of Newport's cultural life.

Outcome 8: Leadership across the cultural and creative sector will be increasingly diverse and representative of Newport's residents.

Priority 2: *Community* - Actions and Success Measures

Outcome	Action	Success Measure
Outcome 5: All communities in Newport see increases in cultural participation and access to cultural activities will be improved for groups with a variety of different needs.	<p>Subject to funding, prioritise the appointment of a Community Grass Roots Culture Officer to assist smaller venue, groups and organisations with advice on marketing, cross venue working, event organisation etc</p> <p>Cultural participation becomes a key element embedded in anti-racism work and social cohesion strategies.</p> <p>Ensure advice and support for organisations working with communities historically excluded from cultural participation.</p> <p>All partners and stakeholders to give greater consideration to participation of people with diagnosed and undiagnosed mental health issues, neurodiversity, and people with sensory issues in their activities, programmes and events.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of people who feel they can already take part in the creative and cultural activities in Newport that they want to (benchmark: 62%)</p> <p>Increase in the number and diversity of volunteers in cultural organisations.</p>
Outcome 6: Participating in culture results in improved health and wellbeing for Newport residents.	<p>Focus community cultural activity on areas and groups where data shows greatest health inequalities.</p> <p>Hold regular briefings from the culture sector for healthcare professionals in Newport sharing insight and opportunities for culture sector support to their work.</p>	<p>Mapping shows increased spend of cultural organisations focussed on areas of deprivation.</p> <p>Financial data shows cultural organisations increasing proportion of their income from health and wellbeing work and funding sources. Explore collaboration opportunities with Preventions and Inclusions team.</p>
Outcome 7: The Welsh language is increasingly used and is valued as a critical part of Newport's cultural life.	<p>Work in collaboration with Menter Iaith Casnewydd and other community groups to build on existing regular Welsh language activity provision, encouraging more people, both young and old, to embrace the use of Welsh.</p>	<p>Increase in number of people attending Welsh language events and activities e.g. weekly walking and chat groups.</p>

	<p>Further promote and expand the annual Gŵyl Newydd Festival to reach more people across Newport.</p> <p>Deliver a successful Urdd Gobaith Cymru in 2027.</p>	<p>More people attending the Gŵyl Newydd Festival and interested in speaking Welsh regularly in general.</p>
<p>Outcome 8: Leadership across the cultural and creative sector is increasingly diverse and representative of Newport's residents.</p>	<p>Cultural organisations offer paid internships, board shadowing experience, and similar opportunities to historically underrepresented groups.</p> <p>Cultural organisations advertise board positions openly with clear role descriptions, expenses paid, and consideration of frequency and timing of board meetings to suit availability of more diverse candidates.</p> <p>Jobs, and volunteering opportunities advertised across a variety of non-traditional media.</p>	<p>Representation of non-White, LGBTQ, and other groups in cultural organisations' leadership teams and boards better reflects Newport ONS census proportions.</p>

Case study: Operasonic

Founded in 2014, Operasonic is a community music charity based in and working for the people of Newport, South Wales so music can be there for everyone – to give voice, to tell stories, to be joyful, to be emotional, to be loud and proud. Operasonic delivers a range of projects and works with a wide variety of professional and pre-professional musicians, community groups and schools.

Operasonic's voice work projects include two choirs- one singing in Welsh and one using songs from around the world, as well as offering a music group for homeless people, with regular performance opportunities at large events such as The Newport Ship Open Day and Maindee Festival. They have previously toured groups to New York, France and Ireland. Operasonic collaborates with a range of exceptional musical partners, including Welsh National Opera, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Carnegie Hall in New York to offer the very best of music talent to co-create with the people of Newport.

Operasonic was awarded Arts Council Wales Portfolio funding and are now further building their team and activity, working with Newport's tradition of strong connections between culture, community and the third sector, including projects with Eden Gate (Homeless support Charity), Sencom (Sensory and Communication Support Service) and Bundles (who offer emergency provision for families) amongst others.

Operasonic created and delivered a Pathways programme to offer young people free opportunities to look at training for the music industry. Sessions included DJing for beginners, beat-box skills, African drumming, songwriting and music production. They offered free online songwriting workshops for young people aged 12 to 25 and courses for writing music for TikTok. Members of their early career Cohort created original Sonic Commissions in response to artwork from CELF: National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales. Operasonic also employs two Romani interns who support all Operasonic activity as well as producing a music video for Roma Band 'The Newport Boys/Terne Cave Newport'.

Operasonic produced the very successful Dock Stage as part of The Big Splash Festival and delivered summer music sessions for families across Newport. Completing the summer with an outdoor music and art day for families in Beechwood park- again showcasing the rich talent of young performers in Newport.

Case study: The Riverfront - Celebrating Cultural Identity and Cohesion

The Riverfront provides opportunities and a platform to celebrate cultural identity and cohesion. Their arts development initiatives focus on establishing The Riverfront as a vital cultural and community hub in Newport. They offer a thoughtfully structured, inclusive space that fosters skill development and creative expression among Newport's diverse communities, local groups, and emerging artists.

Through a collaborative approach, The Riverfront co-produces and supports a variety of community events such as Lunar New Year, Polish Independence Day, the Windrush Film Festival, Caribbean Heritage, and International Women's Day. Each event highlights diverse cultural narratives while fostering shared understanding.

Long-term Support for Creative Groups and Practitioners

They take a long-term approach to supporting the development of creative groups and practitioners, helping them grow. For example, Roots is an organisation that promotes creativity and self-expression for young Muslim girls, empowering them by nurturing their creativity. They support Roots through artist development, event co-production (Eid and Diwali), open access workshops, and longer-term connections.

Examples of Well-being and Community Initiatives

- Collaborations with Inside Out Cymru: This partnership has led to the establishment of the Well-being Hub and the Art and Dementia group.
- Take A Breath Choir: A weekly singing group for people feeling isolated. This group has opportunities to work with partner organisations such as Symphonia Cymru and showcase their collaborations during Christmas and other events in our calendar.
- The Romani Cultural Arts Association: The Riverfront have nurtured a relationship with the Association, who meet weekly to run crafts and music sessions, culminating in a large-scale performance in the main theatre.

Visual Arts Initiatives

The Riverfront's visual arts initiatives cater to both emerging and non-professional artists. For example, clients from Eden Gate, a local charity supporting people with experience of homelessness, have showcased their work, finding value and validation in exhibiting within a professional setting.

By providing a safe environment and skilled support, The Riverfront enables these groups to develop confidently and collectively, as partners with a voice to contribute and shape the centre's role within Newport's creative landscape.

Priority 3: Newport - growing skills for culture

Summary: Newport's strengths in our cultural offer and creative industries depend on highly skilled people doing innovative work. We will recognise, develop and value cultural and creative skills and work in partnership across sectors to ensure that we create opportunities for all, nurture diverse leadership, and attract and retain talented people.

We are proud to have had the fastest growing Creative Industries sector in Wales from 2015-2022, and of the estimated 5,500 jobs and £330m in GVA the creative sector brings to Newport's economy. We know that building on this success will require greater investment in the cultural sector, creative businesses having the resources to help them grow and individuals having the skills to flourish in their creative careers.

We will grow the education, training, and opportunities people need to take the next step in their creative journey, with a particular focus on delivering for children and young people because it is critical for our success that they can access opportunities to work in the cultural sector, and that our organisations continue to attract the best new talent. The cultural sector will continue to work collaboratively with our schools to offer a high quality creative education, and we will use all the opportunities afforded by the new curriculum to help teachers deliver creative skills to their students.

We will work with higher education providers to ensure that creative individuals and organisations have the opportunity to access the spaces, facilities, training, and networks that they require to thrive.

As well as delivering growth in the creative economy with resulting increases in jobs and investment we will continue to help people across Newport to pursue creative hobbies, passions, and side-hustles.

Priority 3: Skills - Outcomes

Outcome 9: Our creative economy will be larger, providing more jobs, investment, reach, and profile. This growth will take place across the ecosystem, from the visual art to digital innovation, and from grassroots initiatives to our larger institutions.

Outcome 10: Our young people and future talent will be able to access clear pathways that enable them to pursue creative hobbies, passions, and careers, through schools, further and higher education, and in their career development.

Priority 3: Skills - Actions and Success Measures

Outcome	Action	Success Measure
<p>Outcome 9: Our creative economy will be larger, providing more jobs, investment, reach, and profile. This growth will take place across the ecosystem, from the visual art to digital innovation, and from grassroots initiatives to our larger institutions.</p>	<p>Work collaborative to develop training and toolkits supporting freelancers, staff and volunteers at different levels from new to sector, to early career professionals to established practitioners.</p> <p>Develop clear signposting to existing business support for cultural and creative practitioners.</p> <p>Organisations encouraged to become Real Living wage employers and go beyond minimal legal standards in providing secure and stable employment.</p> <p>Young people and adults with additional learning needs will be offered essential opportunities to develop new skills, boost their confidence, improve social skills, and encourage personal growth through creative activities.</p> <p>Continue delivering creative opportunities for young people and adults with additional learning needs through Reality Theatre's high quality projects / programmes.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of people who feel they can already take part in the creative and cultural activities in Newport that they want to (benchmark: 62%)</p> <p>Increase in employment in the cultural and creative industries in Newport as measured by ONS data.</p> <p>Increase in number of culture and creative sector businesses accessing business support.</p> <p>Increase in number of Real Living Wage employers in the cultural sector in Newport.</p>
<p>Outcome 10: Our young people and future talent will be able to access clear pathways that enable them to pursue creative hobbies, passions, and careers, through schools, further and higher education, and in their career development.</p>	<p>Work closely with Colleg Gwent as it establishes its new campus to ensure that all students have access to cultural opportunities on and off campus, and that the college has a clear understanding of the skills needs of the sector.</p> <p>Develop a set of desired outcomes for Newport from the Urdd Eisteddfod (2027) and convene representatives of the culture sector with the Urdd for regular conversation to plan how the sector can contribute.</p>	<p>Universities and Colleges regularly engage with the Newport culture sector for advice and support in both course development and improving student experience.</p> <p>KPIs for Urdd Eisteddfod impact agreed and measured.</p>

Case study: Tin Shed Theatre Co.

Tin Shed Theatre Co. is an innovative theatre company that has been an integral part of Newport's independent cultural scene for over 15 years. Founded by three students, Tin Shed Theatre Co. has evolved organically, producing raw and exciting theatre locally, nationally and internationally.

Based in the heart of Newport at The Place, Tin Shed Theatre Co. prides itself on its deep connections with freelance artists, creatives, and diverse local communities, weaving them together through bold and brave live theatre. Known for large-scale, site-specific productions, Tin Shed Theatre Co. transforms unconventional outdoor and heritage spaces into powerful theatrical experiences.

Notable examples of Tin Shed Theatre Co.'s work includes a spectacular adaptation of Moby Dick in 2019, which was staged on the Newport Transporter Bridge, re-imagining a classic tale for non-traditional 21st century audiences. The impressive production featured professional actors alongside community performers and received outstanding reviews.

Caption: Tin Shed Theatre Co.'s production of Moby Dick, part of the Big Skies project commissioned by Living Levels.

Other projects include Y Bont, an international cultural residency programme exploring industrial heritage with international partners in France and Spain, promoting Newport's heritage and creativity internationally. Heuldro, a Welsh language celebration of heritage and ritual alongside Cadw took place at Bryn Celli Ddu on Anglesey.

Tin Shed Theatre Co. inspires co-creative collaborations with residents, audiences and professional performers, telling stories in new and exciting ways, using creativity and culture as a vehicle for social change. The company provides professional pathways to employment in the arts for young people and community members, offering hands-on experience and valuable skills.

Through its weekly engagement theatre groups, YAC (Youth Arts Collective), The Public Theatre Co. and Hatch Youth Theatre, Tin Shed Theatre Co. offers children, young people and communities the opportunity to curate their own theatrical experiences and nurture their creative skills, whilst working with professional practitioners.

Tin Shed Theatre Co. has an extensive background of developing creative civic spaces for the widening of accessibility and participation to arts and culture. Their work has seen the creation of multiple city wide venues, workshop & social spaces such as The Nest, Unit 9 and most recently The Place, Newport.

Priority 4: Newport - enduring culture

We will develop solutions to address the challenges facing the sustainability of the creative and cultural sector, paying particular attention to the fact that 98% of our businesses in this sector are small, employing 10 people or fewer. This means that we need to ensure businesses have access to growth advice and support, and that the sector has clear forums that can give it a collective voice to ensure that the huge contribution it makes to our economy does not go unnoticed and is thoroughly integrated into city plans and strategies.

We will build on the work undertaken by Ballet Cymru, Operasonic, and Tin Shed Theatre Co. (funded by Arts Council Wales) that is setting up a route for young people to advise on and participate more fully in culture in Newport. We will create a governance structure for the sector to oversee the implementation of this strategy, building on the work of the Steering Group that has nurtured it to date. We will ensure there are regular networking opportunities for the sector to listen to, share and support each other – and to present our work to senior leaders in other sectors.

The cultural and creative sector contributes hugely to the work of our sectors (particularly the visitor economy, education, and health) and we will ensure that leaders and networks in those sectors, and across the city, value and champion the creative sector and understand that our cultural organisations, creative events and venues are a critical part of the city's life.

Financial sustainability is critical to forming an enduring sector and we will use all available funding mechanisms to bring greater resources into the cultural and creative sector and grow our creative economy.

The climate emergency requires strong responses from all sectors and the cultural and creative sector has a vital part to play, in reducing our own emissions, in working with our audiences to minimise the environmental impact of their participation in cultural events, and in educating and inspiring people to take positive action for the climate and nature. We will grow our understanding of our sector's carbon impact through better use of data, support the decarbonisation of our venues and spaces, encourage sustainable travel to cultural activities, share skills and knowledge, and continue to deliver artistic programmes that present the climate emergency to the public.

Priority 4: *Enduring* – Outcomes

Outcome 11: we will establish a clear operating model for the implementation of this, and future, Culture Strategies involving Newport Council, cultural and creative organisations and freelancers. We will develop opportunities for young people and other residents to shape our cultural offer. We will create strong networks that give the culture sector the opportunity to engage positively with health, education, visitor economy and other sectors.

Outcome 12: Organisations across the cultural and creative sector will have a clearer understanding of their environmental impact and will be reducing their carbon footprint, as well as playing an active part in helping Newport become a net zero city.

Outcome 13: The culture sector will be funded through a wider range of funding mechanisms, we will develop effective partnerships with national organisations that bring resources to Newport, and our organisations will be more financially resilient.

Priority 4: *Enduring* - Actions and Success Measures

Outcome	Action	Success Measure
<p>Outcome 11: we will establish a clear operating model for the implementation of this, and future, Culture Strategies involving Newport Council, cultural and creative organisations and freelancers. We will develop opportunities for young people and other residents to shape our cultural offer. We will create strong networks that give the culture sector the opportunity to engage positively with health, education, visitor economy and other sectors.</p>	<p>Support the Young People's Arts Advisory Group currently being initiated and develop a plan to ensure that its work continues beyond the currently agreed funding period.</p> <p>Develop an active network, working with the Council but chaired by the sector to progress the Culture Strategy, develop a culture sector network and advocate for the sector.</p> <p>Strengthen the culture sector's ability to connect with the private sector.</p> <p>Involve sector closely in any further City of Culture bidding or equivalent.</p>	<p>Governance of implementation for this strategy through an evolved steering group is widely understood and not dependent on the Council.</p> <p>There are regular network meetings and cultural organisations report that these help them to engage both within and cross-sector.</p> <p>Increase in the number of people who feel they can already take part in the creative and cultural activities in Newport that they want to (2024 figure: 62%)</p>
<p>Outcome 12: Organisations across the cultural and creative sector will have a clearer understanding of their environmental impact and will be reducing their carbon footprint, as well as playing an active part in helping Newport become a net zero city by 2030.</p>	<p>Cultural organisations in Newport have net Zero strategies with clear milestones and action plans.</p> <p>Cultural organisations are signposted to within sector and cross sector training, advice and networking events around climate action.</p> <p>Carbon literacy training and resources available to freelancers and artists and clearly signposted.</p>	<p>Reduction in direct CO2 emissions by cultural organisations operating venues in Newport measured principally through gas/electricity consumption data.</p> <p>Increasing proportion of audiences use public transport to reach venues and events – measured through audience surveys.</p>

<p>Outcome 13: The culture sector will be funded through a wider range of funding mechanisms, we will develop effective partnerships with national organisations that bring resources to Newport, and our organisations will be more financially resilient.</p>	<p>Newport City Council use convening power to help local organisations meet with national bodies for networking and project development.</p>	
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Thank you!

This Culture Strategy has been produced with help and insight from many of Newport's amazing residents, artists, and creatives, and from the organisations listed below. We offer our thanks to them all for their time and effort.

Age Alive, Ballet Cymru, Barnabas Arts House and Café, CADW, Caerleon Festival, Coffee & Laughs, Community House, Cwtsh, Dolman Theatre, Ffoto Newport, Friends of Newport Museum and Art Gallery, Friends of the Newport Ship, Friends of the Newport Transporter Bridge, Gallery 57, Kidcare4U, Living Levels Partnership (led by RSPB), Ludek Polish Community Group, Maindee Unlimited, Menter Casnewydd, Amgueddfa Cymru, National Trust, Newport and Gwent Literature Club, Newport BID, Newport CAN Network, Newport Council Access group, Newport Dragons RFC, Newport Live, Newport Rising, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Operasonic, Our Chartist Heritage, Race Council Cymru, Ringland History Group, Romani Arts, The Corn Exchange, The Reality Theatre, Tin Shed Theatre Company, University of South Wales, Urban Circle