



THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2021-30 PETERBOROUGH CULTURAL STRATEGY

The Vision for Peterborough in 2030 is a transformed Cultural Scene, renowned for

- Its **collective ambition** to make Peterborough a better place for everyone living working or visiting, with culture at its heart
- The breadth and **diversity of its cultural life**, driven by an inspiring range of communities and a young and engaged population
- Boundless **creative energy** and innovation that is supporting the city's growth
- Peterborough people **working together** and doing great things
- Its outward-looking and **impressive range** of cultural activities
- An **astounding heritage** accessible to everyone
- People who **make and learn** throughout their lives
- People loving **the environment** and embedding nature in their way of life

To achieve this vision, the CORE OBJECTIVE of the Cultural Strategy is to foster and promote a vibrant culture in Peterborough which

- *Drives EXCELLENT ART and CELEBRATION OF HERITAGE*
- *CONNECTS, REFLECTS and INCLUDES Peterborough's many diverse and isolated communities*
- *Is ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE and celebrates how people in Peterborough love and work with their environment*
- *Is an ECONOMIC DRIVER for creative industries, for tourism and for inward investment, growing skills valuable to all sectors*
- *Promotes and grows Peterborough as a CULTURAL DESTINATION welcoming visitors, businesses and communities*

These ambitions form the core cultural investment principles for Peterborough. We expect significant bids or proposals to all sources to reflect some or all of them, alongside aligning to the overall vision.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Grow the cultural activities of all partners to**

- Enable everyone to have opportunities to make, enjoy or celebrate culture, whether based around their locality, or around their affinities and identities, and people coming together in peace and health;
- Create and enhance culture which transforms lives and underpins cohesion, quality of life and prosperity in Peterborough;
- Celebrate and reflect diversity of communities in practical ways including programming, marketing, allocation of spaces, festival access etc;
- Celebrate Peterborough's open spaces and beautiful buildings, reaching net zero by 2030 and building environmental impact into everything we do - from good practice in venue management to programmes celebrating and protecting our landscape; and
- Growing confidence, skills and capacity to make amazing work here in the city through residencies, business start-ups, workspace and other support.

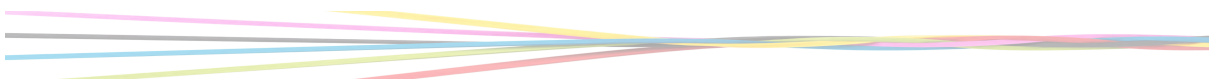
2. **Bid for City of Culture for 2029**, building on the preliminary work started in 2021 with and by the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Accelerate the growth of outward looking and rich relationships, supporting the repositioning of Peterborough regionally, nationally and internationally, in collaboration and competition with other medium sized cities, as a destination and site for culture. Develop a robust programme which promotes participation and activities across Peterborough.

3. **Create resilient, effective and inclusive cultural leadership:**

- Establish a body for culture (arts and heritage), provisionally named the Peterborough Cultural Alliance (PCA), to be owned and governed as set out in the Leadership Model;
- Ensure cultural leadership is reflective of the whole city so it can be effective in delivering the Strategy, through inclusive recruitment, membership and other processes;
- Commission new art work and work in response to or celebrating our heritage, working with local and visiting practitioners, in a range of venues and ensure it is widely known about and accessible;
- Promote systems and processes which support practitioners and organisations to do better work and collaborate and innovate together
- Report publicly once a year on progress against this Strategy, with an in-depth review in the second half of 2026, and renewal of the Strategy overall in 2031.

4. **Maximise investment in culture** in Peterborough, with cultural organisations working with all the other important elements of Peterborough's development, for the future; building resilience so culture supports and enables people at all stages of their lives. The strategic approach will include:

- Developing and sustaining cultural investment for the long term in Peterborough, through leverage and growing capacity, reflecting the growth plans for the area; recognising HMG's strategy for Levelling Up and the ACE shift to a place-based agenda as well as the impact of culture in attracting private-sector inward investment;

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- A Peterborough--wide collaborative approach to bidding for future funds, whether commercial investment, philanthropic or public support to asset development and improvement promoting the objectives and vision of this strategy;
 - A funding stream between which secures resources for the proposed Alliance for three years, which includes capacity to lever other investment streams over the longer term, as part of a shared programme of collaborative interventions, including developing a heritage community capacity, a programme for the mini-Vine and support for post-COVID resilience and growth across the sector;
 - Include a wider definition of culture in the next Infrastructure Funding Statement on the use of CIL resources, enabling use of funds to grow capacity as envisaged in this Strategy¹, both through PCC itself and in partnership with communities and Parish Councils;
 - Supporting and enhancing the delivery of inward investment objectives as in the Stronger Towns Fund and other regeneration and growth programmes;

5. **Build stronger partnerships** within and beyond the cultural sector, especially:

- Ensure joined-up marketing and promotion for the cultural life of Peterborough, whether events, heritage assets, festivals, open buildings and so on. Build collaboration both for front-end content and data-sharing to build stronger markets for culture;
- Work with young people (under 25) to formulate their best way to interact with the Alliance and hold it to account, and ensure their input into programming, curation, participation and delivery; undertake this work in a creative, artist-led manner which reflects the work to date in being outcome focused, creating new art and connected to their immediate concerns. Implement the outcomes of this project;
- (Re)create a network of heritage attractions to work together on promotion and marketing, to include a proactive approach to intangible and oral heritage. Ensure a strong relationship between arts (contemporary practice) and heritage assets and activities. This network to embed a robust approach to profiling and collecting heritage assets from newer and more diverse communities, and working with those communities to build audiences;
- Work with festivals to encourage participation and co-production across cultures and communities and increase awareness and joy in the diversity of Peterborough;
- Work with partners in health, care and education to maximise the benefits offered by cultural activity, from volunteering with a Friends group to performing professionally, reducing reliance on other medical or other expensive, unsustainable interventions.

¹ Date when this is due to be confirmed: current statement at <https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/asset-library/PCC-Infrastructure-Funding-Statement-2019-20.pdf> is for 19/20 and only refers to museums and libraries.



PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The point of performance indicators is to assess whether what we want to happen is actually happening, and whether our actions have contributed to those changes. Without any indicators or format for measurement, there will be no drive for acknowledged success in this Strategy. Yet, measuring indicators is its own industry and quickly becomes the worst enemy of real change.

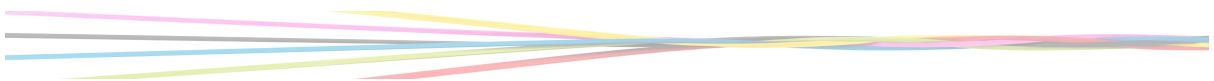
The suggested indicators are not simply measures for the proposed Alliance. They are for the ecology of Peterborough, intended to measure progress by the entire area towards the objectives and vision set out in this Cultural Strategy. It is recommended that the Board and Director of the new Alliance will set out specific indicators of their success – just as other partners will be expected by funders to show how their KPIs sit within this overall Strategy.

In developing the Strategy there have been several discussions about ‘what success would look like.’ We have not developed a formal ‘theory of change’ but we are keen to ensure we can monitor and demonstrate progress towards the objective above. A number of points have been made by many participants:

- Keep it light touch – what do we really want/need to know?
- Don’t make it a burden on stretched institutions and individuals
- Where bodies or practitioners are funded by the same funder (eg ACE) use the same measurements whenever possible

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS for the Cultural Strategy are proposed as:

Outcome	Performance Indicators	Baseline	How measured	Frequency	Comments
Growing the cultural offer in Peterborough	Diversity in artists and events; range of types of activity offered; increased collaboration between organisations and individuals.	To be determined and collected in 2022 (and compared to available 2019 data)	Existing material collated by PCA.	Annual review	All cultural commissioners and organisations paying for cultural activity to collaborate
Growing and diversifying audiences/markets for cultural activities in Peterborough	Intelligence, experience and data (quantitative and qualitative) from venues and production companies. Structured learning between partners about the information.	To be determined and collected in 2022 (and compared to available 2019 data)	Existing material collated by PCA. Consider wider use of Audience Finder questions/data. Perceptions and experience of young people particularly important.	Annual review	Relies on achieving compatible and shared data about audiences. Inclusion ambitions mean demographic data will be important. This will rely on commitment from all involved. Partners collaborate to promote rich data on cultural activities, eg through sampling and joint learning.
Prepare a robust bid for City of Culture 2029	Shortlisted and win the title	From current levels of coordination and confidence	Delivery (in line with any Business Plan agreed by the Combined Authority)	Annual review of progress. Big review 2026	Combined Authority decisions expected November. Peterborough decisions will be related.
Create resilient, effective, inclusive leadership for culture in Peterborough	Establish a Cultural Alliance able to deliver this Strategy and be that leadership	Current scenario of people-centred (rather than value-centred) partnerships.	Establishment of Alliance. Inclusive Board. Trusted by stakeholders and funders.	Big review 2026 and 2031	Feedback across communities and practitioners will be key, as will effective, proactive and responsive relationships across sectors
Reputation of Peterborough internally and externally changes to fit the Vision 2030	Press coverage, visitor footfall at attractions, venues and hospitality, and views of residents	Current limited coverage, low leisure tourism and regular vote as worst place to live	Improved quality and quantity of coverage	Big review 2026 and 2031	A key challenge is building pride and confidence of residents, and their willingness to speak out for their city.
A diverse and resilient creative practitioner base in the city	More productions/exhibitions /events; greater investment in creative and heritage activities; range of people involved	First baseline is the Asset Base combined with the consultee list and membership of the Cultural Forum. All these should grow.	Use of resources created in Asset Strategy and ongoing case studies	Big review 2026 and 2031	Measured by applications for ACE support, there has been tangible growth in the last 10 years. This can now be better measured against the material created in 2021.



Outcome	Performance Indicators	Baseline	How measured	Frequency	Comments
Align the cultural vision with environmental commitment to promote and respond to the need for sustainability and innovation	Peterborough meets UK ambitions for environmentally conscious cultural production.	Under-developed systematic relationships between environmental and cultural sectors in commissioning, networking or events.	Frequency and profile of specific events and commissions; quality of environmental management of cultural assets and cultural opportunities in open spaces.	Big review 2026 and 2031	Big opportunity for Peterborough to capitalise on the commitment and passion of residents. Work with partners to develop specific indicators for buildings and events.
Continued and improved investment in culture in the city	Income from all sources: commercial, private investment, philanthropic and public, across capital and revenue. Partnerships across sectors.	Round up of investment in 2022 post Cultural Recovery Fund.	Known investment and commercial income where possible	Annual review, enabling ongoing transparency and strategic alignment	The more investors can see the strategic impact with stronger ticket/product sales, a high value economy and improved reputation, the more investment will be generated. Increased social benefits including more cost-effective approaches to tough problems.
Growth in skills level among young and working age population	Enhancing the level of creative skills as percentage of qualifications; use of cultural experience to deliver skills gaps across CPCA area; Peterborough creative and customer facing skills to match those across CPCA	To be agreed with CPCA; proposal based on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Skills Report. March 2021: Annex A & B, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Skills Advisory Panel	Using CPCA information	Annual	To be confirmed in partnership with CPCA. Important to include heritage skills as a component of this, to build succession into the sector.