

About Culture Richmond

Culture Richmond is a new vision for culture in Richmond upon Thames. It sets out how our arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services will enrich the lives of those who live in, work in and visit our borough.

Over the next ten years we aim to be ambitious, inclusive and responsive. **Culture Richmond** has been developed during an extraordinary time in world history; the COVID-19 pandemic has affected almost every aspect of daily life; exacerbating existing inequalities and greatly impacting physical and mental health and wellbeing. And yet, out of the challenges and changes we have experienced have come opportunities, innovation, creativity and community spirit, new ways of living, working and travelling,¹ and it is these we want to embrace.

Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on our borough is not our only challenge. In 2019 Richmond Council declared a **Climate Emergency**; we also have an ageing population; a need to seek out new ways to support our young people and a responsibility to address inequality, whilst ensuring we are making the most efficient use of our resources. Continuing to offer value for money will be essential in what is going to be a challenging and uncertain time for local authorities.

Over the next ten years our cultural services will need to be agile and ready to adapt and respond to changing environments and local, national and global challenges. Our arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services will work together, and with other council services, to maximise resources and explore new models of delivery so that culture can be a valuable mechanism for us in tackling key issues and supporting the success of our borough.

The benefits the arts, libraries, green and open space and sport and physical activity have on people, place and the economy have long been proven. Our task over the next decade is to find new ways to better utilise our existing assets and services while supporting the growth of culture and creativity in the borough to meet the challenges we face and contribute to a thriving and resilient local ecology.

It is in this spirit that **Culture Richmond** has been developed. Our aim is that by 2031 Richmond has an innovative, diverse and accessible cultural offer which seeks to empower, enable and inspire and contributes to the growth and success of our borough, communities and people.

View [Culture Richmond 2021 to 2031 executive summary](#)  (pdf, 1.7 MB)

What do we mean when we talk about culture in Richmond?

We know from conversations we have had as part of the development of **Culture Richmond** that the word *culture* is extensive and means different things to different people. Many people told us that they think culture should enrich lives; broaden horizons; be inclusive and bring people together, but we also recognise that the term can be alienating and feel elitist and exclusive to some, which is exactly the opposite of what we want our services to be.


For the purposes of setting out our new vision, when we talk about culture in **Culture Richmond** we are referring administratively to the activities and areas of work that sit within the arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services, which include but are not limited to; the performing arts, visual arts, museums & heritage, public art, film, parks, highway verges, allotments, conservation, playgrounds, libraries, literature & literacy and community sports, fitness and physical activity. As technology and cultural forms shift and develop, so will our services.

Whilst our definition of culture does not specifically include the creative industries, we recognise the close alignment with culture and are committed to building those relationships and contributing to the borough's creative industries through **Culture Richmond**.

Next: Methodology

Footnotes

1. Residents reported feeling connected to their local community and more appreciation for their local area, with changes to behaviour including 50% of people shopping more locally; 50% of people using their car less; 73% of people walking more and 39% cycling more

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CULTURE RICHMOND

2021 – 2031



**A NEW VISION FOR ARTS, LIBRARIES,
PARKS AND SPORT & FITNESS IN
RICHMOND UPON THAMES**



CULTURE RICHMOND 2021 – 2031

A NEW VISION FOR ARTS, LIBRARIES, PARKS AND SPORT & FITNESS IN RICHMOND UPON THAMES

The benefits of culture on people, place and the economy have long been proven: In Richmond we know how important culture is to the success of our borough and are committed to finding new ways to better utilise our existing assets and services and support the growth of culture and creativity.

In September 2020 we set out developing a new shared vision for our arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services. This involved a period of research & information gathering, asset & infrastructure mapping and consultation and conversations with cultural organisations, members of the public and other key stakeholders to identify how our services can support the development of a thriving, resilient and innovative cultural sector which contributes to the growth and success of our borough, communities and people.

The result is **CULTURE RICHMOND**: an ambitious new vision for culture in Richmond which sets out how our arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services will enrich the lives of those who live in, work in and visit our borough over the next decade.

WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT CULTURE IN RICHMOND?

We know from conversations we have had as part of the development of **CULTURE RICHMOND** that the word *culture* is extensive and means different things to different people.

For the purposes of setting out our new vision, when we talk about *culture* in **CULTURE RICHMOND** we are referring administratively to the activities and areas of work that sit within the Council's arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services, which include but are not limited to; the performing arts, visual arts, museums & heritage, public art, film, parks, highway verges, allotments, conservation, playgrounds, libraries, literature & literacy and community sports, fitness & physical activity. As technology and cultural forms shift and develop, so will our services.

Whilst our definition of culture does not specifically include the creative industries, we recognise the close alignment with culture and are committed to building those relationships and contributing to the borough's creative industries through **CULTURE RICHMOND**.

"A local authority that is investing in culture – fantastic"
– *Richmond Culture Review respondent Feb 2021*

VISION

Our vision is that by 2031 Richmond will have an **ambitious, innovative** and **sustainable** cultural offer which offers **more opportunities** to more people and fosters **lifelong access** to culture for **all**.

Central to achieving this vision are 5 key priorities:



WE PURSUE EXCELLENCE

We want to raise the bar to stretch ambition and nurture a cultural sector which challenges and takes risks and provide residents and visitors with an original, relevant and inspiring cultural offer.



WE ARE RESPONSIVE

We will find better ways for culture to support the borough's public health prevention and promotion strategies, community mental health and tackle health inequalities.



WE COMMIT TO INCLUSIVITY

We are committed to improving equality and giving a voice specifically to our residents and communities who don't currently feel they are being served by facilitating a much more diverse and accessible cultural offer.



WE EMPower

We will empower, enable and inspire all those who live in, work in and visit Richmond by building a sustainable, resilient and innovative cultural sector which will help to attract new investment and partnerships, provide opportunities for employment, skills & talent development and foster a lifelong interest in culture.



WE MAKE SPACE & PLACE

We will advocate for Richmond as a place locally, nationally and internationally, broadening Richmond's distinctive identity and building a more responsible and sustainable borough.

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

Central to achieving our vision is collaboration –our relationship with other Council services, partners and the local community is invaluable and we will continue to work in partnership over the next decade to deliver **CULTURE RICHMOND** and achieve our goals.

NEXT STEPS...

Our plan for monitoring the progress and success of **CULTURE RICHMOND** to ensure our vision remains relevant, open and transparent is now underway and will include producing detailed service action plans; an evaluation methodology, equality impact monitoring and formal review points at years 1, 3, 5 & 8. Working groups will be established to support the delivery of specific priorities, including a representative group of 'critical friends' to help us review progress and measure success.

Methodology

We recognise the value of culture and the role it can play in responding to the success of our borough.

Why *Culture Richmond*?

With this in mind we wanted to develop a new shared vision for our arts, library, parks and sport and fitness services over the next decade which would:

- Establish a definition for what we mean when we talk about culture in Richmond
- Provide the opportunity for engagement with Richmond's current cultural sector as well as open up dialogue with new people and communities, including those not currently engaged with Richmond's cultural services
- Embed culture within the wider context of the Council's work
- Support the development of a sustainable, resilient and influential cultural sector which is agile and ready to respond to current and future priorities

How *Culture Richmond* was developed

In September 2020 we began a period of information gathering, engagement and conversations to help inform a new vision for culture.

The aims of this process were to:

- Inform and guide the development of a new vision for the Council's cultural services
- Hear from existing cultural organisations and users to develop a picture of the current cultural landscape in the borough
- Open dialogue with new stakeholders and begin to understand some of the reasons behind non-engagement with culture
- Discuss how cultural services can support public health & wellbeing, children, young people & youth and the borough's climate change agenda

What we did

- Carried out a literature review of relevant local and national strategies and existing research, data, consultation and examples of best practice
- Mapped Richmond's current cultural infrastructure
- Held interviews and conversations with Council officers across culture, public health, Achieving for Children, economic development and tourism to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Launched the [Richmond Culture Review](#): an online survey; workshops and focus groups
- Involved [Arts Council England](#), the [GLA](#), [Parks for London](#), [London Sport](#) and Richmond Council's Consultation, Community Engagement & Communications teams in the development

Richmond Culture Review: online survey

761 local people & **102** organisations took part in a public survey January – February 2021.

View an [analysis of the survey results](#).

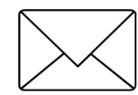
Richmond Culture Review: online workshop and focus groups

In March 2021 representatives from **45** local organisations and businesses and **56** members of the public took part in online workshops and focus groups, some of which were led by **64 million artists**.

View a [summary of the workshops and focus groups](#)  (pdf, 2.8 MB).

'A local authority that is investing in culture – fantastic'
Survey respondent Feb 2021

[Next: Context: Richmond today](#)

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Context

Richmond today

Richmond is an outer London borough in South West London. It has a population of 199,157 and covers an area of over 5000 hectares. 57% of the borough is open space¹, with 21 miles of river frontage and it is the only borough to span both sides of the River Thames.

Richmond has:

- **12** [libraries](#)
- **130** [parks & open spaces](#) managed by LBRUT
- **64** playgrounds in sites managed by LBRUT
- **6** [sport & fitness centres](#) and **11** [public tennis court](#) sites managed by LBRUT
- **12** [outdoor fitness sites](#)
- **8** accredited museums and; heritage sites
- **6** theatres and arts centres²
- The largest dedicated rugby union venue in the world - Twickenham Stadium

For full contextual picture of the borough please visit [DataRich](#).

Engagement and investment in culture

- **1,074,655** physical items borrowed from libraries during 19/20
- **199,817** e-library items borrowed from libraries during the COVID-19 pandemic (March 20-March 21)
- **1,164,487** attendances at sports facilities in 19/20
- **67.7%** of young people aged 5 - 16 physically active³
- **62,535** bookings for sports facilities & tennis courts within LBRUT parks during 20/21
- **31,485** visits to Orleans House Gallery in 19/20
- **400+** voluntary cultural organisations
- **100+** community events in parks annually
- **23,000** bike journeys per day⁴
- **£8,828,400** total annual spend on LBRUT cultural services 19/20

SWOT analysis

Strengths

- Physical resources & natural environment - open space & river
- Rich heritage & history
- Active & engaged population with highest adult employment rate in London⁵
- High percentage of children & young people physically active
- Existing cultural infrastructure and extensive voluntary sector
- Home to major international cultural attractions including Kew Gardens, Hampton Court Palace, Twickenham Stadium, Richmond and Bushy Parks

Weaknesses

- High cost of living and lack of affordable housing – leading to inequality⁶
- Under-developed professional arts sector
- Limited accessible and affordable spaces for arts and community use
- Diversity and inclusion in cultural sector
- Uncoordinated programming and marketing
- Public perception of the borough and reputation across London is limited
- Difficult for smaller organisations to benefit from tourism and reputation of major cultural attractions
- Securing external funding for culture

Opportunities

- How culture is created and consumed post COVID-19
- Embedding culture within key agendas – public health, economic development, the creative industries to help to meet outcomes
- Attracting national and international visitors to the borough
- Presenting the borough's history and heritage in new ways
- Opportunity to benefit from pan London initiatives, partnerships and funding


Threats/challenges

- Climate Emergency
- COVID-19 recovery: economic and health and wellbeing
- Ageing population⁷
- Youth wellbeing and opportunity⁸
- Attracting new investment and jobs
- Proximity to central London – many residents can easily access services not available in the borough
- Uncertain funding landscape

[Next: Vision](#)

Footnotes

1. The average % of open space for an outer London borough is 38% [GiGL](#)
2. [Cultural Infrastructure Map Mayor of London](#)
3. London & national average is 46% [Data Rich \(Public Health England\)](#)
4. 2nd out of 33 London boroughs [DataRich](#)
5. 80% of working-age adults are in employment & 49% volunteer. [DataRich](#)
6. Richmond displays the fifth highest rate for income inequality in London and the highest GCSE attainment gap of all London boroughs between disadvantaged school children and those not facing disadvantage (31% gap) [One Richmond Youth Needs Analysis 2020](#)
7. The number of people aged 65 years and over is projected to increase to 43,100 by 2035. [DataRich](#)
8. Richmond displays the fourth worst average mental wellbeing score for 15 year-olds in London and has the highest proportion amongst London boroughs of young people engaging in three or more risky behaviours. [One Richmond Youth Needs Analysis 2020](#)

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Vision

Over the next ten years our cultural services will both directly deliver services and work with partners to enable and inspire ambitious cultural activity. We will make the best use of resources; maximise opportunity and contribute to the growth and success of our borough, communities and people.

Our vision is that by 2031 Richmond will have an **ambitious, innovative** and **sustainable** cultural offer which offers **more opportunities** to **more people** and fosters **lifelong access** to culture for all.

Priorities

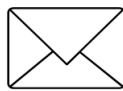
Central to achieving this vision are five key priorities:

- [We pursue EXCELLENCE](#)
- [We are RESPONSIVE](#)
- [We commit to INCLUSIVITY](#)
- [We EMPOWER](#)
- [We make SPACE & PLACE](#)

Navigating the uncertain financial landscape of the next decade is critical and this has been a key consideration in the development of ***Culture Richmond***.

Our cultural services recognise the need to support the Council's financial stability over the coming years and will explore more efficient use of their budgets in order to maximise impact.

Our commitment to reducing costs by offering better value for money and leveraging additional income and opportunities for investment through new programmes, collaborations and ways of working is reflected in our five priorities.

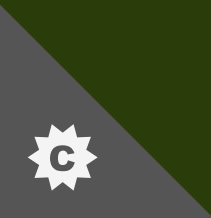


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Achieving our vision

Culture Richmond will be flexible and respond to the needs of our borough and people over the course of the next ten years.

Our arts, library, parks and sport & fitness services recognise a need to more closely align culture with wider Council priorities. We will work with other services and providers to build a more robust delivery model for culture which will support the Council in maintaining financial stability and offer better value for money.

Collaboration will be central to this – our relationship with partners and the local community is invaluable and instrumental to Richmond’s success and we will continue to work in partnership over the next decade to deliver **Culture Richmond** and achieve our goals.

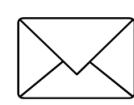
Monitoring progress

This is how we will monitor the progress of **Culture Richmond** and ensure our vision remains relevant, open and transparent:

- The Head of Culture, along with officers from all four cultural services will work with statutory services to oversee the delivery of **Culture Richmond**.
- Action plans outlining how each of our cultural services will contribute to the vision and priorities will be produced within the first year of **Culture Richmond**.
- A representative group of 'critical friends', including from local cultural organisations, businesses and charities will be established to help us review progress and measure success.
- A methodology for evaluating the impact and success of **Culture Richmond** will be developed and will include equality impact monitoring and formal review points after the first year and then again at years 3, 5 & 8.
- Additional working groups to support specific priorities and actions will be established where appropriate.

Next steps

- **Culture Richmond** is now live!
- Please check back here for news and opportunities to be involved



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