

2020 Draft

South Kesteven District Council Cultural Strategy



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Culture and Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has created enormous challenges to cultural organisations across the world.

Locally, the cultural sector has been deeply affected by the closure of arts centres, leisure centres and other public buildings. The district's independent cultural destinations, including visitor attractions, arts venues, museums and libraries have also closed their doors.

Gravity Fields, South Kesteven's internationally renowned science and arts festival - due to be held in Grantham in September 2020 - was postponed until 2022 and a wealth of cultural events and activities scheduled across the 2020 have been postponed and rescheduled.

Oscar Wilde, in his 1889 essay *The Decay of Lying* wrote that, "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life." The priorities identified in South Kesteven's Cultural Strategy have been brought sharply into focus during the Covid-19 pandemic. South Kesteven's responses to Covid-19 illustrate the relevance of these priorities in light of the health emergency.

The pandemic recognised the enormous importance of cultural activities to the health and wellbeing of residents. The lessons learned from handling the crisis can be applied to the council's responses to delivering this Cultural Strategy over the coming months and years.

Partnership, Accessibility, Event Timings, Cost and Communication were all highlighted as areas for future focus and development.

South Kesteven's responses to Covid-19 illustrate perfectly the importance of these factors in order to deliver an effective, relevant and timely strategy for action, putting partnerships at the heart of a successful campaign to fight the crisis.

Furthermore, providing residents with information

and support - ensuring maximum accessibility and reach to this information - connected individuals, communities and organisations together like never before.

The timing of interventions and the speed of delivery supported those most in need of help and advice. Throughout the crisis, protecting financial stability and introducing measures in relation to costs, supported those in most need.

Throughout the pandemic, a successful online programme of arts events and greater digital engagement played a huge part in maintaining our connection with stakeholders and residents.

The Covid-19 pandemic has added extra impetus for the need to collaborate and rebuild together, working together towards our goal for South Kesteven to be the best place to live, work and visit.



Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy



Councillor Stevens
Chair - Culture and Visitor Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Overview

Over the next few pages we throw the spotlight on culture in South Kesteven.

‘Culture’ means different things to different people. To understand culture, it is vital to listen: to others interpretations, views, hopes and aspirations.

That is exactly what we’ve done through our cultural conversation – listened to the views of people who produce cultural activities and goods and services, and those who experience them.

The messages from those conversations have been received loud and clear and we can draw a number of conclusions.

South Kesteven is full of cultural talent and opportunity. There isn’t a single aspect of cultural representation that doesn’t feature somewhere in the district. People delivering cultural activities and experiences want to do more and reach out more – to fellow practitioners and to new audiences.

Residents want to engage with the cultural offer, but face obstacles – time, cost, accessibility. Taking these views into account, our conclusion is that we don’t need to reinvent the wheel. We don’t need massive transformational projects that will cost a fortune.

Instead, we will:

- Build on the fantastic assets that are already here.
- Bring talent out into the light and encourage it to flourish – enabling people who deliver cultural activities and experiences to access new audiences.

- Bring culture to the people – not always expecting them to go out and find it.

And we should do this together - all of us taking a share and a pride in what we already have to offer to enrich our lives.

This should be a shared vision - a joint investment by us all in the cultural growth of our district, using our skills, expertise, knowledge and creativity to build upon our past successes.

We can learn from those things that weren’t successful and investigate how we can collaboratively continue to develop the assets, talent and opportunities we have available to us.


Culture for the people, by the people. Whether that is: film, music, drama, dance, visual arts, literature, poetry, heritage, museums, sports, physical activity, science and scientific exploration, sculpture or digital innovation.

We can all play our part: as artists, sportspeople, writers, readers, viewers or listeners.

This strategy is about how we can help everyone to get involved.

Commencing in the autumn of 2020, the strategy will be implemented by a programme of events, projects and initiatives generated as part of SKDC’s Corporate Plan for 2021-22 and delivered by all those working in Arts, Heritage, Sports and Physical Activity and The Sciences right across South Kesteven.





"The artist is not a special kind of person; rather each person is a special kind of artist."

Ananda Coomaraswamy, 19th Century Sri Lankan artist, renowned for interpreting Indian art to the west

The national and international picture

The world changed over the past decade. The growth of social media and the explosion of new technology, our greater environmental awareness and increasing economic challenges resulted in people's tastes shifting and expectations were revalued.

With the arrival of Covid-19 in 2020, the world now faced the single biggest shift in the 'natural order' of things for generations. Most cultural activities, large gatherings and participatory events will be changed enormously for an unspecified time – maybe forever. The cultural sector will need to respond quickly, finding new ways of working and engaging with audiences. Public safety will take on a whole new meaning. Regaining public confidence and exploring new approaches to the use of public spaces will be key to creating an effective and viable post-Covid-19 cultural landscape.

The economic challenges of austerity had already meant council budgets, like South Kesteven's, had become tighter. Now, more than ever, we will need to be sure that we are providing safe, accessible, prioritised services, offering value for money for our residents in all areas of our business, including culture and leisure.

South Kesteven District Council responded positively to the challenges of the pandemic to the cultural offer.

Within Cultural Services, the Arts team launched a regular e-Newsletter, connecting arts centre patrons and the creative community together, promoting online programmes and signposting residents to the online work of local practitioners.

A series of specially commissioned pieces were created for the programme schedule, with a number of local practitioners engaged in the delivery of projects.

Working with InvestSK, local practitioners were signposted to relevant government grants and support, as well as grants from other trusts and providers. A specific Artists & Craft makers free listing was also included within InvestSK's online retail directory WhatShop.

The influence of global and national issues will certainly continue to impact on wider investment and growth. Pressures on the high street and small businesses were already well-known too, but South Kesteven's excellent connectivity to the rest of the UK still offers great potential and its strong community identity – very evident throughout the pandemic - hope for the future.

With the cultural sector's vital input into health and wellbeing, the argument for a strong, well-communicated, accessible cultural offer is as relevant as ever.

Introduction

You're receiving this document because South Kesteven is your home. We want you to read this, get involved, and tell us your thoughts. South Kesteven District Council's vision is for our district to be recognised as one of the best places to live, work and visit in the UK.

Research tells us that cultural activities enhance quality of life, health and well-being and bring communities together.

A strong cultural offering connects people and communities, offers new experiences, enriches lives and creates an identity for the area. However, South Kesteven's challenges in delivering this are complex.

South Kesteven is not only a large district it is also very diverse. From our bustling market towns to quaint villages and rural locations, there can never be a 'one size fits all' solution to providing cultural opportunities.

Varied and busy programmes in our market towns may not always be accessible to our rural communities but, it is equally important that those residents can access a broad cultural offering. And if we are to continue to develop and thrive culturally it is also important we continually engage and inspire our children - as our residents of the future.

This document seeks to illustrate how we can achieve our vision.

Our journey...

Last year, we started conversations with you about how you spend your time and what you think about the arts, culture, heritage, sports, science and other activities on offer here in South Kesteven. This document is our response. Your feedback shows South Kesteven has a wonderfully rich cultural landscape, with popular venues, open spaces and a varied festival programme enjoyed by residents and visitors.

We want to make sure what's on offer continues to make our towns, villages and rural areas great places to live, giving you the opportunities and encouragement to get involved. We hope our vision is yours too - a vision that is realised through us working with organisations and individual artists, local businesses and schools, where creativity, innovation, cooperation and shared opportunities are encouraged and enabled to flourish.

"Cultural activities enhance quality of life, health and well-being and are a great way of bringing communities together."

*Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
– Cabinet Member for Culture &
Visitor Economy SKDC*



Previous cultural strategy

South Kesteven District Council's previous cultural strategy echoed the themes of Lincolnshire's priorities:

- to **promote** the benefits of South Kesteven culture
- to **preserve** and develop South Kesteven unique cultural offer
- to enable and encourage people to **participate** in South Kesteven cultural activity

The strategy looked at the district as a whole - celebrating the strength of South Kesteven's rich heritage, creativity and sense of community.

Over the past five years, much has been implemented to realise these ambitions, with the contribution of cultural activities firmly embedded in South Kesteven's long-term plans for economic growth and prosperity.

Among the actions delivered from the strategy are:

- The new improved cinema in the heart of Grantham's cultural quarter and the critically acclaimed Gravity Fields Science Festival.
- The continued wide and varied programme of arts, music, drama, dance and other cultural activities in Stamford including the first Arts Around Town event in February 2019 and again in February 2020,

which brought a whole range of arts and drama out into the streets.

- Partnership working with schools in Bourne including the Westfield Academy and Bourne Academy.
- Collaborating with the Bourne Old Town Hall Trust, through the Community Funding scheme, providing programming support and offering ongoing consultation.
- Working with The Deepings Community Library to support and promote The Deepings Literary Festival
- Taking arts and culture out to the rural communities through the Music in Quiet Places and the Live & Local Rural Touring scheme.

"The contribution of cultural activities is firmly embedded in South Kesteven's long term plans for economic growth and prosperity."

*Councillor Judy Stevens
Chair - Culture and Visitor Economy
Overview and Scrutiny*



A low-angle photograph of two people performing acrobatics on a dark metal structure against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. One person, wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt and light blue jeans, is positioned higher on the structure, reaching down. The other person, wearing a red and yellow long-sleeved shirt and blue leggings, is suspended in the air, holding onto the first person's hands. The background shows the tops of green trees at the bottom of the frame.

What is culture?

The word culture means different things to different people - from music and films, to books and the food we eat, to our religion or beliefs.

But often when we talk about cultural activities, they are seen as 'high-brow' pursuits that are not really aimed at ordinary people. We want to dispel that myth.

At South Kesteven District Council we believe culture is for all of us - whatever our age, background, religion, or interests. Our focus is on supporting a varied programme that has something for everyone in our district, whether you love playing rugby or watching football, reading books or writing novels, whether you are a stay-at-home or working parent, a couple who love history or theatre, or someone living alone who wants to get out and meet new people.

We believe culture is more than just the arts, and should include a programme that spans the arts, sport and physical activity, heritage and the sciences. In Arts Council England's draft ten-year strategy it uses culture to mean all areas of activity associated with the art forms and organisations it supports - from heritage collections to combined arts, libraries to literature, museums to music, drama, dance and all things in between.

Sports and physical activity

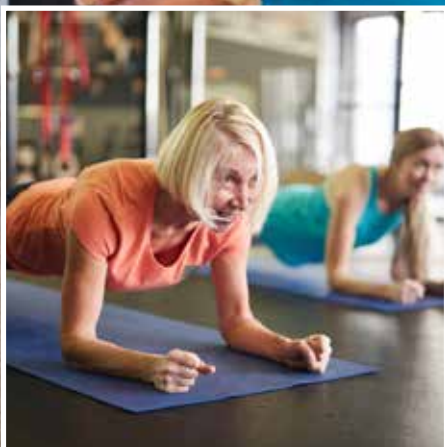
You may wonder why a cultural strategy includes sports and physical activity when it traditionally would have been kept separate. There has been extensive research on the connection between the two and the impact culture can have on sport, the way it's played and where it's played in the world. The main reason we are bringing sport and physical activity into our cultural strategy is because of the important role it plays in improving health and well-being and quality of life.

Sports and physical activities also play a vital role in building communities by bringing people together with common interests. Whether your children or

grandchildren play football, rugby, cricket or other team games, or maybe you play or run a team yourself; sports and most physical activities connect people.

When looking at the cultural landscape we cannot just look at arts and heritage in isolation because there is so much cross over. This strategy aims to encourage a much closer relationship between the two.

Sports and physical activities improve health and well-being and bring people together.





The sciences

Science has been incorporated into our new strategy because of the unique link South Kesteven has to scientific thinking. Our science heritage, through Sir Issac Newton, has provided the catalyst for the Gravity Fields Festival and generates thousands of visitors to the area each year via Woolsthorpe Manor in Colsterworth (his birthplace) and Grantham's King's School.

The district's historical association with manufacture and engineering and our current link to a host of technology specialists offer a superb opportunity to celebrate our heritage and develop the sector for future investment and growth.

Bourne also hosts a science festival - Bourne SciFest - a biennial event organised by a group of volunteers associated with schools in the area, encouraging children at all levels in the curriculum to be inspired by science. Presenters go into schools with amazing and exciting science shows to engage children and generate interest in scientific learning and potential careers. Many of the district's schools demonstrate significant successes in science education, thanks to high-quality facilities and innovative programmes. Technological advances over recent years have highlighted great career potential for young people and the opportunity to support innovation and skills for future business investment.

A 'Go To Scientist' programme – working with the National Trust at Woolsthorpe Manor in Colsterworth - seeks to generate further interest in science across all disciplines and provide the focus for developing this strand of the strategy. The work will bring together academics, higher education providers, science agencies, local schools, businesses and third sector

"The agricultural, scientific and technical sectors account for over 25% of all South Kesteven businesses. This is particularly prevalent in the South of the district where companies such as Alltech, Garford Farm Machinery, Martin Lishman and Opico are all significant employers."

organisations to promote science learning, through projects and celebrating scientific achievements. Once again South Kesteven District Council will provide the framework for joining up initiatives and linking local activity to wider programmes.



Our aims

The jewels of our district are rich and varied, our museum collections, archives and heritage assets tell the stories of how South Kesteven has played an important role in almost every period of history. We have some magnificent stately homes including the magnificent Grimsthorpe Castle near Bourne and Belton House near Grantham (with its vast children's adventure playground). Our schools, churches and airfields have equally enthralling tales to tell of our famous sons and daughters who helped shape history.

Over recent years we have also established a reputation for hosting internationally-acclaimed festivals such as Grantham's Gravity Fields Science Festival and Stamford's Georgian Festival. We are very proud of other community-led events such as the Deepings Literary Festival and Bourne Sci-Fest which add to the very packed programme of events across the district.

We'd like more of you to spend your free time in South Kesteven, at our cinemas or theatres, with local clubs or associations, at our sports and leisure centres, in our parks or woodlands, or at one of our many varied festivals.

Whether you are young or old, live alone or have a growing family, live in a small rural village or a bustling market town, you should be able to access the cultural activities you enjoy.

"Our cultural strategy will seek to maximise the opportunities for you to get involved in the cultural life of our district."

This is our 'strategy' on how we can support that 'vision' to become a reality - to enable you to be more active, have fun, socialise, learn new things or just get out and enjoy your local area.

We want culture to be accessible to everyone in South Kesteven - offering all kinds of activities from pumpkin rolling at Easton Walled Gardens at Halloween, to Burghley Horse Trials, a local watercolour group to a village cricket match, a drama workshop to film screenings at our arts centres.

We aim to break down those barriers that may have previously prevented you from getting involved. Our vision is for South Kesteven to be a place to entertain and inspire you, to increase your knowledge and understanding of other times and other places and to encourage creativity.

Where we are now

South Kesteven is a large thriving district with four major historic towns and urban areas - Grantham, Stamford, the Deepings and Bourne and more than **80** rural villages. More than **140,000** people call our district home along with more than **6,000** businesses.

The district has a rich and vibrant heritage that goes far beyond the stone, bricks and mortar of its ancient monuments, grand stately homes, castles, glorious churches, historic market squares and listed buildings.

The historic landscape, places and natural environment form a distinct character that can inform and inspire all forms of cultural activity. For example, the geology of the district and the limestone belt, running through from Fulbeck and south into Stamford, has created the unique historic built environment of those towns and villages.

South Kesteven is brimming with stories of discovery, exploration and invention and residents who have changed the world and shaped our understanding of the universe.

A key part of our vision is about ensuring we maximise opportunities to celebrate our history in an accessible, relevant, and inviting way for modern audiences.

The offering in South Kesteven is already rich and diverse:

- There are around **265** sports clubs in South Kesteven and our leisure centres welcome over **108,000** visitors per year.
- Bourne Corn Exchange hosts over **250** events a year from craft fairs to dinner dances, amateur dramatics to live music shows and taekwondo to

local clubs.

- From April 2018 to March 2019, Stamford Arts Centre sold more than **62,000** tickets for more than **750** cinema and live shows.
- Over the same period, residents and visitors bought **31,230** tickets to see **224** performances at The Guildhall Arts Centre in Grantham.
- There were also almost **850** other sessions held between the two sites that people could get involved in from art and music classes to exhibitions and crafting workshops.
- In 2019 the second Deeping Literary Festival welcomed over **1,100** people and brought some big name authors to the district.
- The Live & Local Rural Touring scheme, which brought music, theatre, dance and comedy to village halls across the district, sold **1,249** tickets.
- Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club brought first class cricket to Lincolnshire for the first time in over 15 years and have committed to a future relationship with the district. Over five years, there will be nine first class fixtures held at Grantham Cricket Club together with a pilot programme of outreach coaching events across South Kesteven.

Our vision is about celebrating our history in an accessible, relevant, and inviting way for modern audiences."





How we've helped arts, heritage, sports and cultural activities find funding

We are already helping creative organisations and local groups access additional sources of funding. The creation of LotterySK, South Kesteven District Council's weekly online lottery gives charities, organisations and groups across the district an additional way of raising money. LotterySK held its first draw in October 2018 and in the first year raised just under £70,000 for good causes in South Kesteven. For every £1 ticket sold, 60 pence goes to good causes in South Kesteven - more than twice the proportion raised by the National Lottery. Anybody over 16 can buy a ticket but only organisations in our district benefit. Players have a one in 50 chance of winning one of the prizes which range from three extra tickets to the £25,000 jackpot. When a participant chooses one of the good causes, the organisation receives a 50 pence donation, and 10 pence goes to SKDC Community Fund. If no charity is chosen, all 60 pence goes to SKDC Community Fund which local organisations meeting the criteria can bid for.

South Kesteven District Council has awarded more than £10,000 in grants to poets, artists, dancers and singers as part of its Creative Artists' Small Grant fund.

There are also a range of other funding and support opportunities for charities, community and voluntary groups including:

- › Small community grants through the council's Ward Member Scheme.
- › Capital funding of up to £10,000 through the SKDC Community Fund.
- › Unlimited revenue and capital funding via the council's crowdfunding platform CrowdfundSK - the council could pledge up to half of the funding (maximum of £10,000) to a project not previously funded via any other council funding source.

We have been supporting a wide range of not-for-profit organisations and community groups across the district to develop their projects and secure external funding to deliver them. Many have received support and advice at an early stage, particularly around identifying potential funders and developing a robust and achievable fundraising strategy. Groups from a wide range of arts, heritage, sports and cultural services have benefited. As well as offering tailored funding advice and support there is a strong focus on building their fundraising capacity and skills to achieve a more sustainable future.

The conversation

We know much has been achieved since the last Cultural Strategy was introduced in 2013. However, as we look again at the cultural future of the district we wanted you to help us shape our future cultural vision.

At the beginning of 2019 we started a conversation with you about culture in South Kesteven. We held a series of workshops in each of our market towns to encourage you to talk about what you do in your free time and what barriers prevent you from getting involved.

More than 200 people attended these events and we'd like to thank every one of you who came along for all your comments, suggestions and feedback which has helped shaped this document.

Throughout March, April and May last year, we promoted an online survey encouraging you to 'Join the Conversation' and tell us your views, needs and aspirations for how we can develop our cultural offering in the future. We asked you about:

- The arts, heritage, sports and physical activities you like to take part in.
- How often you participate.
- How you found out about what's on in the district.
- How we could encourage more people to get involved.
- What barriers prevented you from getting involved.
- How the council could help overcome those barriers.

In total, 1,073 people took part in the online conversation.

Over the summer of 2019, we also met with sports clubs and other interested groups, organisations and

individuals to discuss wider leisure interests, as well as delivering a number of cultural focus groups with children and young people.

As a result of our 'cultural conversations' throughout 2019 the priorities you've identified bring our ongoing cultural aims back into focus.

At best a strategy can only provide a snapshot of the cultural landscape at that time and the delivery of specific outcomes is invariably organic, requiring ongoing review and a long-term commitment to the process.

So, at the start of this new decade we are now going to re-energise and refresh our commitment to the areas you feel require our attention.

"1,073 people took part in an online survey about culture, heritage, the arts, sports and sciences in South Kesteven. 200 came to workshops. We spoke to sports clubs, young people and other groups. We listened and this is our response."





Our response

How you spend your free time is influencing how we think

When we decide how to spend our free time, we prioritise the things we enjoy. However, just because we like sports, doesn't mean that we don't like theatre, and just because we enjoy visiting museums and heritage sites that doesn't mean we don't like the cinema, or can't enjoy a game of tennis.

You don't separate your interests, so why should we?

Our future approach aims to work with partners, communities, and other organisations to identify areas where we can work together and maximise our cultural offering.

By reviewing what is offered at our heritage sites, arts and leisure centres and in our wider cultural programme we will identify what could be taken to community centres and village halls and feed into a wider programme of activity.

Just as our critically acclaimed Gravity Fields science festival in and around Grantham and Stamford's highly successful Georgian Festival bring together the arts, heritage, sports and sciences, we aim to look for additional opportunities in the district to further interconnect and bring programmes together across disciplines to attract the widest possible audiences.

Achieving our vision is not something South Kesteven District Council can, or should, do alone. We need to think differently about how we can collectively do things to make our cultural activities as sustainable as possible.

We will continue to identify alternative ways of funding and resourcing programmes. We will support creative organisations to find other grants to reduce reliance on local government funding, so we are the creators of our own destiny.



You said:

- › We could communicate with you better about what's on offer.
- › You could not always get to activities and events because of poor public transport.
- › The timings of the activities sometimes didn't fit in with busy modern lives.
- › There should be more opportunities for artists, societies, clubs and organisations, as well as others with an interest in cultural activities, to meet up and share ideas.
- › The cost of events was sometimes a barrier to participation.
- › You want opportunities to network with other like-minded people or organisations to share knowledge, expertise and organise events and activities.



What we will do

Partnership

The key focus of our response is about partnerships. We will look to further our work with organisations across the district - from community associations, village halls and parish councils to schools, colleges, businesses and national bodies - to widen the reach of our cultural offering.

Through the five workshops we held with you in 2019, we know there are lots of creative and cultural organisations throughout the district with ideas about how they can encourage greater participation in creative, cultural, sports, science and leisure activities.

Our first priority is to focus on providing opportunities to bring people together both physically and virtually through networking events and social media groups to share ideas, expertise and opportunities.

The workshops showed us there is a real passion for culture in the district but often artists, groups, organisations and individuals can feel isolated. We are proposing to make it easier for you to meet by hosting regular cultural networking events to bring creative people and groups from all cultural sectors together to share ideas and skills, supporting professional development.



Accessibility

Inadequate provision of public transport was cited by many of you as a reason for not attending events. While we cannot make buses and trains more frequent or put on additional bus routes, we could bring events closer to you.

We are proposing to work closer with parish councils, parochial church councils and community associations to help utilise some of the fantastic facilities you have within your villages and rural locations, in order to bring some of the district events closer to where you live. It might be an arts exhibition in your local village hall or a small theatre production in your local church. We will seek to build upon the success of our rural touring programme with the Live & Local Rural Touring scheme and South Kesteven District Council's hugely popular Music in Quiet Places initiative.

Cost

Some people said the costs of events put them off attending. Many events are presented or promoted by third parties (including events held at the arts centres and other venues). For these events ticket pricing is set by the event producer or organiser and is invariably directly related to the actual costs of staging the activity.

We will work to ensure the events presented by South Kesteven District Council are available at a range of prices across the programme throughout the year.

We will continue to provide a selection of free events as part of our festival programme and will work with partners and other organisations and providers to offer concessions and support for those who might need them.

We will actively promote the wide range of events and activities that are offered free or discounted. Some said that it was hard to run not-for-profit organisations from buildings because of the costs. Where possible we will signpost them to other organisations providing grants and funding for a range of 'pop-up' opportunities, residencies and other venue-based activities.



Event timings

A number of you told us the timing of events can be a further barrier to engagement. Invariably events are scheduled around set-up requirements and other physical and logistical factors.

We will work to ensure that events presented by South Kesteven District Council are offered at a range of times across the programme throughout the year, so whether you are available mornings, afternoons, evenings or weekends, during the term-time or the school holidays, there will be events and activities you can get involved in.

We will seek to remind event promoters, organisers and producers of the challenges and opportunities timings create.

We will actively promote the timings of events and activities.

We will always seek to advertise the programme in advance so patrons can plan their attendance in good time.

We will also work with promoters and other organisations presenting events in South Kesteven to try, wherever possible, to avoid diary clashes and to encourage events that complement each other, or are on similar themes, to co-exist more effectively and encourage wider participation.

Communications

The pivotal part of our whole response is a renewed focus on communications. While the majority of people appreciate the wide range of cultural events and activities on offer, some of you told us you aren't always aware about the events happening in the district.

We will work to improve our communications to ensure all our residents and potential visitors know what is available in our district, when it is taking place and how to access it.

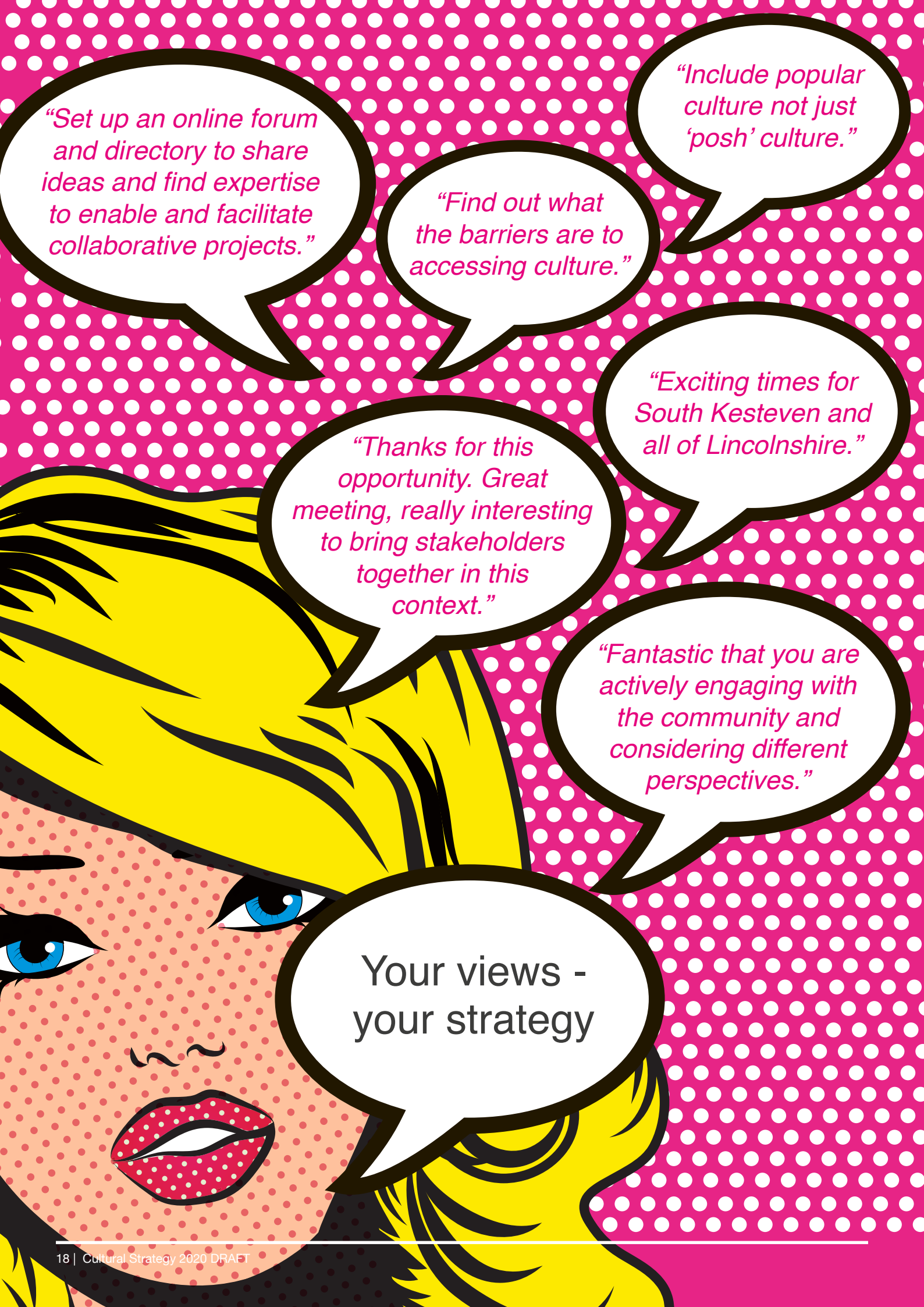
We will focus on finely honing our communications in a number of ways.

Chiefly, we will investigate options to develop Discover South Kesteven as a wider on-line directory or portal for all things cultural in the district. This directory could signpost residents to organisations and activities, help people understand alternative transport options and assist organisations and individuals in finding funding streams for projects.

Furthermore, we will focus on providing opportunities to bring organisations, groups and other interested parties together to share ideas and develop programmes of activities, acting as a facilitator and enabler establishing a strong cultural network for South Kesteven.

We will also make sure we are effectively using all the platforms already available - such as the district's destination brand Discover South Kesteven. This will support signposting people to what is available across the whole district and further develop a district-wide calendar of events with clear timings, prices and links to other similar events and interests.

Finally, we will look to maximise our opportunities to communicate through new and existing channels, from local newspapers to our own SKToday magazine and social media - asking you, our residents, to help us get our information out to as wide an audience as possible. The underpinning principle of this approach is creating communications about our cultural programme that are timely, relevant, informative and targeted.



“Set up an online forum and directory to share ideas and find expertise to enable and facilitate collaborative projects.”

“Find out what the barriers are to accessing culture.”

“Include popular culture not just ‘posh’ culture.”

“Exciting times for South Kesteven and all of Lincolnshire.”

“Thanks for this opportunity. Great meeting, really interesting to bring stakeholders together in this context.”

“Fantastic that you are actively engaging with the community and considering different perspectives.”

Your views -
your strategy

Conclusion

This strategy will provide the future direction for cultural activities and events within the district and underpin our general approach and priorities. It will drive the delivery of our individual service area action plans and provide the framework for our commitment to share projects with partners.

Whilst the launch of this document coincides with the start of an exciting and enormously challenging new decade, it is merely the starting point for the district's proposed cultural development.

Our strategy looks to highlight and celebrate all that is good about South Kesteven. It is our commitment to championing a strong cultural identity for the district. It is not a static piece of work, it will be subject to regular review, reflection, change and refinement.

Working with our partners within South Kesteven and beyond, we will ensure that culture enhances the character, and is at the heart of, communities across the district.

To achieve this, we will build cultural engagement and accessibility by:

- › Acknowledging the importance of accessible cultural activities for a rural audience.
- › Recognising the significance of engaging children at young age to inspire and challenge them.
- › Exploring clear routes for cultural practitioners to bring their work to new audiences.
- › Celebrating and showcasing the importance of consistent, regular, small-scale interventions by connecting activities together to maximise their audience potential.

We will enable others to drive the cultural agenda by:

- › Liaising with community groups and other cultural organisations to ensure joined up thinking and planning for activities and events.
- › Supporting community/charity organisations, and the incremental growth of cultural projects, through signposting to funding and advice and sharing best practice.
- › Highlighting the opportunities offered by the district's demographic for volunteering.
- › Promoting the creation of a Community Asset Toolkit to help individuals, groups and organisations engage in the development of cultural activities, providing practical advice, guidance and contacts.
- › Actively working towards the development of an online platform, thereby empowering communities to make cultural projects more sustainable through a presence in a high profile, promotional resource that also promotes effective networking and improved event planning.

We will ensure culture crosscuts all we do as a council by:

- › Safeguarding heritage and other community-valued assets through planning and regeneration strategies.
- › Applying consistent messages to encourage cultural endeavour, including, but not exclusively, a strong focus on health and wellbeing.
- › Supporting initiatives to ensure existing and planned festivals and events are environmentally sustainable, demonstrating best practice and sharing expertise, to align with the council's Climate Emergency declaration.

"We look forward to delivering this strategy with you and for you over the coming months."

Let's bring you together."

Michael Cross, Head of Arts, SKDC

