

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

LOCAL CULTURAL STRATEGY

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Executive Summary

Culture is at the heart of communities. The purpose of this strategy is to make Windsor and Maidenhead an active, culturally vibrant and enjoyable place to live, work or study. The strategy is a five-year plan to improve the cultural well being of the Royal Borough, for all individuals and organisations with an interest in improving our quality of life.

Few would argue that cultural activities are not valuable in themselves. However, they also help to tackle the wider agenda of social inclusion, economic development, community safety, healthy lifestyles and lifelong learning.

Our specific definition of Culture is: **The total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which shape the communities in which we live and the way in which we live in the community.** Our general definition is **A community's overall way of life.**

The Royal Borough is blessed with natural and man-made historical and cultural treasures, including the River Thames, Windsor Castle, the Great Park, Maidenhead Bridge, Windsor Arts Centre, Norden Farm Centre for the Arts and the recently opened Thames Valley Athletics Centre. We recognise that the Council itself is just one piece of the cultural jigsaw of the Royal Borough. A wide range of other providers, including the public, private and voluntary sectors make a huge contribution to the cultural life of the area, as well as individual residents.

Our ambition is to stimulate and promote cultural activity all over the Royal Borough in the following ways:

- Act as a catalyst for social and economic regeneration in urban and rural communities
- Protect and enhance our natural environment, by wildlife conservation, planting trees and providing environmental education
- Make services equally available to residents and enable communities to take action to address their needs and aspirations
- Improve people's health and well being, both mental and physical
- Provide learning opportunities for people to become better informed and economically and socially more active.

Building on and developing the existing good work in the Royal Borough is a key aim, but it is also important to embrace new ideas and be creative in promoting new schemes and programmes. One of the largest planned projects is the redevelopment of Maidenhead Town Centre and the creation of a new Civic Quarter, which also aims to stimulate cultural, and community activity in the town. Other community ideas include: more support for volunteers; promoting the establishment of a Heritage Resource Centre as part of a wider Heritage Strategy; encouraging more festivals and using the Internet to its full potential for information on and access to cultural opportunities. Further ideas are contained in more detail in the Action Plans. **We intend to make a difference to people's lives.**

1. Introduction

1.1. Cultural Services

The provision of cultural services by and for all sectors of the community is vitally important. It is increasingly becoming apparent that whilst cultural activities are intrinsically valuable, they also contribute to the wider crosscutting social agenda.

"It is about improving the quality of life for all, allowing people both to derive pleasure and to fulfil their own potential...Equally cultural services play a crucial role in tackling social inclusion, contributing to regeneration, to promoting safer communities, encouraging healthier lifestyles, providing opportunities for voluntary and community activity and stimulating lifelong learning".

Chris Smith, Secretary of State, December 2000

Whilst this strategy is being promoted by the Council of the Royal Borough, it is recognised that most cultural services are provided by the **voluntary** and **private** sector rather than directly by the Local Authority itself. This strategy supports, stimulates and promotes all good quality cultural activity in the area, provided by the full range of organisations.

The term "culture" is often thought of in terms of the opera, fine arts or perhaps local customs and traditions. Agreeing on a definition of culture for this strategy provoked a great deal of discussion. The specific definition that was finally agreed upon is:

The total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which shape the communities in which we live and the way in which we live in the community.

In a general sense, we think it means **a community's overall way of life.**

Culture embraces sport and recreation, the arts, media, crafts, fashion, design, libraries, museums, parks, children's play, visitor management, countryside, heritage, eating and entertainment and much more. It also relates to all cultural services in the Royal Borough, including the private, public and voluntary sector, which give the area its identity and external image.

The Royal Borough's natural historic and cultural environments are unique. The biodiversity of the area needs to be protected and valued. Through our Cultural Strategy we will do all we can to understand, enrich and protect these environments now and in the future.

Youth Culture

"In the fast-changing world of youth culture, new slang, styles and rhythms of speech are among the most important ways in which cultural identities are created and recreated. Cultural identity is also expressed in many other ways, from styles of dress to patterns and structures of social relationships"

Through this strategy, we aim to celebrate the cultural diversity of where we live, creating a vibrant sense of identity for the Royal Borough.

1.2. Development of the Strategy

The government requires all Local Authorities to produce Local Cultural Strategies. Our strategy has been built on the foundations of the very successful Leisure Strategy published in 1997 and has adhered to these principles in its development:

- Putting local people first
- Securing cultural services of the highest possible quality
- Working in partnership
- Achieving value for money
- Responding to the needs of the local community.

The Royal Borough has taken an increasingly active role in leisure and culture since the 1980's. Since becoming a Unitary Authority in 1998, we have had a Directorate charged with cultural matters but culture transcends into the whole Authority;

- Advantage Card
- Allotments
- Arts and Heritage
- Cemeteries
- Children's Facilities
- Community and Youth Services
- Connexions Service
- Countryside and Environment
- Economic Development including Town Centres Management
- Education
- Highways & Rights of way
- Leisure Centres
- Libraries
- Parks and Open Spaces and landscape improvements
- Planning Policy
- Schools
- Sports Development and facilities
- Transport
- Visitor Management including Visitor Information Centres

With such a diversity of services, it is vital that work is co-ordinated and planned. It is also important that the Council works with all cultural agencies to plan activities in a co-ordinated way to make the best available use of resources, in accordance with the Government's modernising agenda.

We have been working hard over the last few years to improve facilities and activities for local people. Recent successes include:

- The development of Grenfell Island in Maidenhead, including the new cinema and health club

- The provision of Teenscene facilities - providing outdoor recreation areas for young people including the two skateparks in Windsor and Maidenhead and giving some financial assistance to the Parish and Town Councils to provide such facilities in the rural areas.
- Helping Windsor Tennis Club to improve their facilities, making them available to the public
- Working with Norden Farm Centre for the Arts in its development, leading to its opening in 2000 and continuing to support Windsor Arts Centre
- Helping local people gain training and careers advice through the Centre for Developing Connections
- Developing free internet use through the libraries
- Promotion of Town Centre events, like Windsor Fashion Week and Maidenhead Food Festival

Students take advantage of free Internet use in Maidenhead Library

The contribution that leisure and cultural services make to the community should not be underestimated. It is now widely accepted that leisure has a role in economic development, health education, social inclusion and community safety and we will ensure that our Local Cultural Strategy both builds on and develops connections in all of these areas.

The Cultural Strategy is for everyone who lives, works, studies or visits the Royal Borough, including Parish and Town Councils, other statutory and voluntary organisations, businesses, clubs, societies, health agencies, schools and colleges. **We want everyone to be involved!**

Contributions from a wide variety of people and organisations have resulted in this, our Cultural Strategy. Thanks go to all contributors, particularly the voluntary groups and community organisations, and the staff of the Directorate of Leisure, Cultural and Property Services who have been integral to the process. The Service User Forums for Leisure and Libraries, Arts and Heritage have acted as excellent sounding boards and contributed much.

The main sources of background information and market research were:

- ° A Strategic Context for the Windsor and Maidenhead Cultural Strategy, carried out by RQA Consultants in November 2000
- ° Leisure Survey, carried out by Market Research Analysis in April 1999.
- ° Economic Impact Study carried out by the Southern Tourist Board in 2001.

A full list of contributors and bibliography can be found at the back, along with useful website addresses.

2. Strategic Framework

2.1. Partnerships

Partnerships are key to our strategy. We want to develop our strategy in partnership with the community, businesses, voluntary organisations, health agencies, parish and town councils. Listed below are some of our existing partners. We aim to develop new and exciting partnerships to help us achieve our aims.

HEALTH AND SPORT

- Berkshire Health Promotion
- Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead District Sports Association for the Disabled (WAMDSAD)
- Voluntary sports Clubs
- Braywick Sports Association
- Sport England
- Berkshire Active Sport Partnership
- Home Park User Group
- Youth Sports Trust
- Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot Primary Care Trust
- Sustrans

OTHER

- Parish & Town Councils
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Southern Tourist Board
- Government Office for South East (GOSE)
- External Funders e.g. Lottery
- Learning and Skills Council, Berkshire
- Berkshire Learning Partnership
- Berkshire Connexions Service
- Schools
- Attraction Operators e.g. Legoland
- Chambers of Commerce
- Windsor Allotments and Home Gardens Association
- Civic Trust
- Windsor and Maidenhead Voluntary Action
- Village Associations
- Workers Education Association
- RBWM Twinning Committee
- Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme
- Millennium Volunteers
- Community Council for Berkshire

ARTS AND HERITAGE

- English Heritage
- Southern Arts
- National Federation of Music Societies
- Norden Farm and Windsor Arts Centres
- Windsor and Eton Society
- Maidenhead Heritage Trust
- Friends of the Royal Borough Museum Collection
- Maidenhead Arts
- Voluntary clubs
- South East Museums Agency (SEMA)
- South East Touring Agency
- Windsor Theatre Guild
- Maidenhead Theatre Council
- Windsor and Maidenhead Decorative and Fine Arts Society
- Clewer Local History Museum
- Berkshire Young Musician Trust
- The National Arts Collection Fund
- ZAMZAMA (Indian Dancing Arts)
- Choral Societies

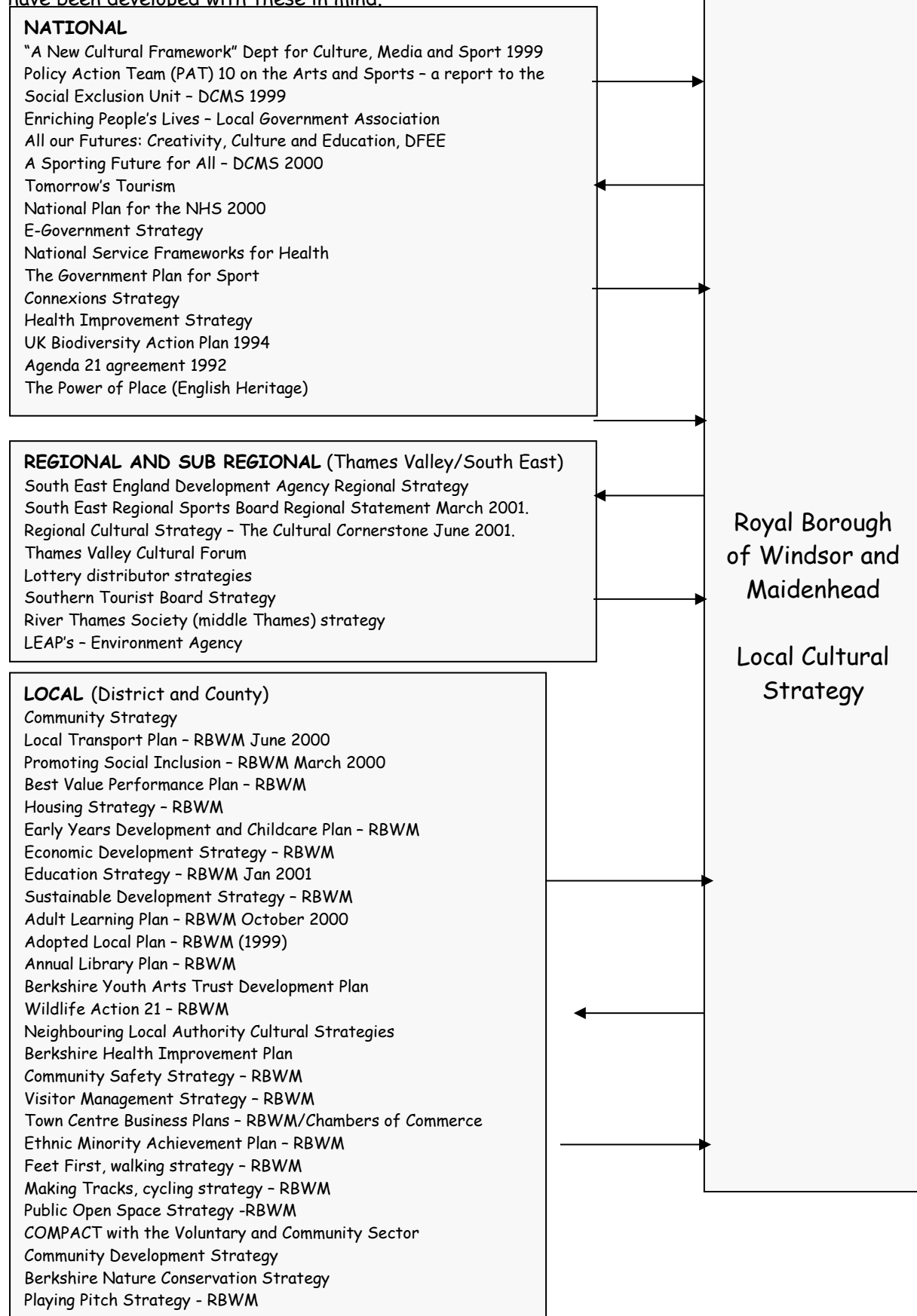
ENVIRONMENT

- Environment Agency
- English Nature
- Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)
- Countryside Agency
- National Trust
- River Thames Society
- Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)
- Woodland Trust
- Crown Estate
- Forestry Commission
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Wildlife Care Support Group
- Berkshire Nature Conservation Forum (BNCF)
- Corporate Environmental Advisory Centre (CEAC)
- Tree Council
- The Ramblers Association
- Council for Environmental Education
- Centre for sustainable Energy
- Learning through Landscapes

RBWM and
the Cultural
Community

2.2. Links to other plans and strategies

As well as working in partnership with other organisations, our cultural strategy takes account of - and links with - other relevant national, regional and local plans. The key themes of our strategy have been developed with these in mind.



3. Strategy Themes

As part of the consultation process, five key themes emerged:

Cultural Strategy Theme	Community Objectives
	To use cultural activities to:
Community and Economic Vitality	Develop dynamic partnerships to enhance our community and economic vitality Develop new or enhance existing facilities to meet the Leisure and Cultural aspirations and needs of the Community Promote the Royal Borough as a prime location for Leisure & Culture & Business
Enhanced and Protected Environment	Protect and enhance our natural environment Promote awareness of our environment and the adoption of sustainable ways of living in people of all ages
Greater Social Inclusion and Responsibility	Make services equally available to all,, to enable communities to take action to address their needs and aspirations.
Healthy Lifestyles	Improve people's health and well being, both mental and physical. Promote the benefits of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle to all people living and working in the Royal Borough.
Lifelong Learning	Encourage and support a broad range of leisure and cultural activities for all. Develop opportunities for the individual to meet their personal leisure and cultural aspirations and goals.

The Strategy Action Plans will deliver **key community objectives**, linked to the above five themes. We believe that by working together with all organisations delivering local cultural services, this can be achieved.

3.1. Community and Economic Vitality

Cultural activities can help to stimulate the local economy. For example, the building of new leisure facilities not only brings work to local businesses but also provides new jobs once the facilities are open. Leisure facilities and attractions such as Windsor Leisure Centre and Legoland provide employment for local people, while Maidenhead has recently seen the opening of three such new facilities: Norden Farm Centre for the Arts, the new cinema and the David Lloyd Health Club. All have contributed significantly to the local economy and have contributed to the regeneration of Maidenhead.

The development of skills, knowledge and confidence of the individual contributes to the development of a vibrant local economy, and defines its cultural place. This development may be through:

- Education
- Youth projects
- Work based training
- Community initiatives

An example being the Millennium Volunteers, where young people undertake 200 hours of voluntary activity.

Tourism is a major employer. It is estimated that tourism supports over 9,000 jobs in Windsor alone and the overall impact of tourism in the Royal Borough is £319 million per year, greater than other heritage locations such as Oxford and Bath.

Major sporting and cultural events contribute to the community and economic vitality of the Royal Borough, their employment of seasonal staff, raising national and international awareness and interest of the location. These include:

- Royal Ascot
- Maidenhead Carnival
- Windsor Horse Show

Smaller local events held in the Parishes, in schools and other venues enhance the local community and contribute to the overall well being of the Royal Borough.

Voluntary cultural organisations such as arts, sports and heritage groups benefit significantly from the support of local businesses in their day to day operation including support for:

- After-school clubs
- Youth sections
- Equipment
- Venues

Our objectives over the next five years are to:

- Develop dynamic partnerships to enhance our community and economic vitality
- Develop new or enhance existing facilities to meet the Leisure and Cultural aspirations and needs of the Community
- Promote the Royal Borough as a prime location for Leisure & Culture & Business

3.2. Enhanced and Protected Environment

The Council supports the principles of sustainability. The Council and Community can contribute to improving quality of life by enhancing and protecting the environment by:

- Using natural resources carefully
- Reducing, re-using and recycling waste
- Limiting pollution
- Promoting nature conservation and protecting biodiversity in as many of our parks, gardens, water environments and open spaces as possible.

What is Sustainable Development?

"Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

RBWM Sustainability Strategy 2000-2001

But further than this, Local Agenda 21 is relevant to society as a whole and the economy. We can contribute to this by:

- Creating or improving places and buildings that function well and look attractive
- Valuing and protecting local customs and traditions
- Creating a vibrant economy with satisfying work without damaging the environment
- Valuing unpaid work
- Improving access to services in ways which make less use of the car
- Protecting and planting trees.

We are very proud of our recent Environmental Management Audit Scheme accreditation, which provides a framework by which we can measure our progress.

We will build on Wildlife 21, the first stage of our biodiversity action plan in partnership with local landowners and organisations.

Many cultural programmes contribute to the Local Agenda 21 aims. For example, youth projects such as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme expeditions help young people develop an appreciation of the countryside.

The continued protection, preservation and enhancement of the environment are a crucial component of helping to ensure that the cultural life of the Royal Borough is sustained and enhanced.

Our objectives over the next five years are to:

- Protect and enhance our natural environment
- Promote awareness of our environment and the adoption of sustainable ways of living in people of all ages

A group of schoolchildren arriving at Braywick Nature Centre
to learn more about their environment.

3.3. Greater Social Inclusion and Responsibility

This came top of the list, being voted the most important theme. We define it as:

"Making our leisure and cultural services equally available to all our residents by taking account of those factors which could lead to difficulty in full participation". (Promoting Social Inclusion, RBWM, March 2000.)

Those factors could include a wide range of situations and problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor housing, bad health, deprivation and so on. The effect is to prevent or make it difficult to access basic rights or services and for people to play their full part in their local communities. These effects, whilst not life threatening, can be damaging to health, can limit quality of life and prevent accessing of equality of opportunity.

Social inclusion is about integration and tolerance amongst ALL groups within society, male and female. However, there are four groups which we will particularly target with policies to increase inclusion. These are:

- Young men aged 14-21
- People on a low income
- Minority ethnic groups
- People living in rural areas with no transport.

In addition, this is about enabling everybody in the community to take action to address their needs and aspirations as well as removing barriers to participation. Examples of this include:

- Community safety: residents and businesses have become involved in "Watch" schemes in partnership with the police
- Arts: the two communities of Windsor and Maidenhead have developed arts centres to suit their own needs. There is a need to ensure complementary programmes between the two centres so that clashes are avoided and a strong focus on creativity and planning is created.
- Environment: the village of Clewer raises money to pay for hanging baskets and then gets volunteers to water them throughout the summer
- Parks and Open Spaces: local people have become involved in the management of their local park or playground through residents associations of "friends of" groups
- Funding: helping clubs to make lottery bids to improve their facilities
- Young people: working with the Youth Offending Team to offer young offenders the chance to put something back into the community by helping to improve local leisure facilities
- Specialist youth projects working with ethnic minority groups
- Youth work in rural areas, supporting village clubs

Our Youth service is a mixture of universal and targeted work. Much of the provision is open access and seeks to encourage citizenship through personal and social development. This is undertaken in a variety of settings, such as neighbourhood youth clubs, special project work as well as on the streets. The targeted work engages with individuals or small groups and is focussed on specific needs, e.g teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse information, advice and counselling. This area of work is very much in line with the Connexions service.

DRAFT Local Cultural Strategy

We will develop this work, ensuring that where possible, the Council acts "locally" for local people. Only through greater social inclusion will we achieve our aim of stimulating cultural activity throughout the Royal Borough and improve the quality of life for everyone.

Our objective over the next five years is to:

- ° Make services equally available to all, to enable communities to take action to address their needs and aspirations.

3.4. Healthy Lifestyles

In recent years, the importance of people's health and well being and the contribution physical activity can make to our good health has been extensively documented, for example through the prevention of coronary heart disease (CHD) and strokes, improved physical appearance, reduced stress etc. Under the recent Local Government Act we now have a statutory duty to **"promote the economic and social well being of communities"**. Partnerships are clearly a priority in fulfilling this duty and RBWM is working with local health agencies on a Health Improvement Programme (HIMP), targets for which are currently being developed.

The ways in which we will help to improve people's health and well being include:

- Promoting healthy living in partnership with other agencies
- Providing a smoke free environment in the workplace and in public buildings
- Making exercise easily accessible and available through well maintained leisure centres and affordable facilities
- Demonstrating that we are providing a health promoting work place for staff
- Encouraging the Healthy Schools Initiative
- Working with doctors and hospitals to promote the use of leisure facilities to improve health
- Promoting healthy eating
- Providing an active holiday programme of events for young people
- Promoting healthy walking through the provision of well-maintained pathways and circular walks
- Developing programmes to tackle young people's substance mis-use
- Developing programmes to reduce teenage pregnancy.

All cultural activities contribute to both physical and mental health of the community, and it is essential that this theme is acknowledged throughout the strategy. Allotments within the Royal Borough contribute to a number of the above in the promotion of health and well being through both physical activity and organic food. Many of the action points which contribute to other themes also assist in maintaining Healthy Lifestyles.

Our objectives over the next five years are to:

- Improve people's health and well being, both mental and physical.
- Promote the benefits of physical activity and a healthy lifestyle to all people living and working in the Royal Borough.

3.5. Lifelong Learning

The Royal Borough is firmly committed to promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. Lifelong Learning recognises that education should be "cradle to grave" and includes early years, youth and community, after school/study support and young people educated in other settings, as well as the formal providers.

Working through partnership arrangements with East Berkshire College, Berkshire College of Agriculture and Charters School a huge variety of adult education courses are offered from:

- Balloon decorating to computers
- Wine-tasting to equestrian studies
- Exploring footpaths to Italian arts.

Projects in Datchet are run in partnership with the Workers Education Association (WEA).

Windsor WEA and Maidenhead WEA are both thriving organisations, with over 450 students between them.

Links have also been made to encourage more learning opportunities away from the main college sites. A fascinating programme is now available, enabling local people to access learning close to where they are. There are currently 20 such activities with particular emphasis on covering areas with little or no current adult education such as Datchet and Dedworth. Projects include computer classes for parents at an after school club and classes for ethnic minority women to voice their unheard learning needs.

The Royal Borough's Lifelong Learning Partnership comprises key players from the private, voluntary and public sectors who have come together to promote, develop and enhance learning and training opportunities for individual and local businesses. Recent projects include:

- Working with disaffected young people to keep them on the learning path
- Supporting a unique training scheme enabling small businesses to benefit from low cost training with larger companies.
- Researching the education needs of women from the Asian Community and adults with learning disabilities.

The Partnership's most recent initiative is an award scheme to encourage more people to reap the rewards of lifelong learning.

There is a thriving section of the University of the Third Age in the Royal Borough and we would like to develop publicity and further links with this organisation.

The full range of cultural programmes contribute to the theme of Lifelong Learning, not only through the extension of skills and knowledge of participants, but also through developing social responsibility and sense of community. This in turn helps to define the sense of place for the Royal Borough.

Our objectives over the next five years are to:

- Encourage and support a broad range of leisure and cultural activities for all.
- Develop opportunities for the individual to meet their personal leisure and cultural aspirations and goals.

4. Local Context

4.1. The Royal Borough's Cultural Heritage

There were several Saxon settlements around Windsor and by the ninth century there was a royal palace at Old Windsor, or Windlesora as it was known then, which was the base for hunting in the vast forests. At the turn of the millennium the Danes were ravaging settlements everywhere and around 1070 William the Conqueror built a timber castle on the chalk outcrop in the manor of Clewer to protect London from invaders. Old Windsor was the second largest town in Berkshire in the Domesday Book, but was overtaken when Henry I turned the castle into a royal residence and New Windsor evolved below it. Windsor Castle is now the largest inhabited castle in the world and an official residence of the Queen.

The towns of Windsor and Maidenhead were granted charter status in the 12th and 13th century respectively, Windsor as a royal town and Maidenhead (Maiden Hythe is first mentioned in 1297) first as a river port and later, in the 17th Century, as a coaching stop on the route from London to Bristol, with Maidenhead Thicket becoming infamous for its highwaymen. Visitors are recorded in Windsor as far back as the 14th century and the "new" town grew up near the Castle.

Just across the bridge from Windsor, Eton village became a much larger town with the founding of Eton College in 1440, originally for 70 poor scholars. Now one of the top public schools in the country, Eton has educated no less than 18 British Prime Ministers.

Conflict came to the area during the Civil War and ironically the Royal Borough supported Cromwell, whilst Windsor Castle became a prison for Royalists. There is a plaque in Maidenhead High Street marking the spot where in 1647 Charles I was allowed to see his children for the last time before being executed in 1649.

By the 1830s Maidenhead was a thriving town famous for its coaching inns and hostelries. . The innovations of the Victorian era encouraged expansion. The building of the first section of the Great Western Railway from Paddington to Maidenhead - including Brunel's unique brick built Sounding Arch across the Thames, commemorated in Turner's famous painting Rain, Steam and Speed - brought an influx of tourists, turning the Thames from a working river into a playground for day trippers. This is epitomised in Gregory's 1895 painting of Boulter's Lock, "Ascot Sunday". Rail links to Windsor were at least ten years behind Maidenhead, mainly due to the opposition of the Headmaster of Eton who did not want a railway link to London as he felt it would bring temptation and corruption to his pupils.

The Edwardian era was one of sophistication, boasting champagne parties, fashionable events and Guards Club functions which took place in the large houses along the river in Maidenhead, until the outbreak of war in 1914. One of the conscripts was a young man called Stanley Spencer who was later to become Cookham's most famous resident. Spencer's unique brand of painting was strongly influenced by his idyllic Cookham childhood and his strong religious beliefs.

The 1960s saw a period of construction with many of the large housing estates being built and the opening of the new Town Hall in Maidenhead. This decade also saw the expansion of "new" cultures

via the arrival of South Asians into the Royal Borough from India and Pakistan. The 70s saw more expansion – the Magnet Leisure Centre was built, along with the nearby mosque, and road links to the M4 were created. These two decades also saw the Royal Borough being used as the backdrop for many films and TV series.

The Royal Borough is twinned with six European towns and cities and regular exchange visits take place throughout the year.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead was officially formed in 1974. Its crest includes Maidenhead bridge, oak leaves from Windsor Forest, a deer, Windsor Castle, a lion, a horse and a swan and symbolises the coming together of the two towns.

“The Royal Borough has changed from a small group of Saxon manors to the thriving place it is today. It remains a haven for tourists, a home for commuters and a bastion of computer technology. And above all it has retained its royal connections through 1000 years of history.”

From A Millennium in the Royal Borough by Luke Over (published by the Royal Borough to commemorate the Millennium).

4.2. Our Geography and Economy

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is one of six Unitary Authorities within the former County of Berkshire. It is in the Government's defined Region of the South East, which extends from North Oxfordshire to the Isle of Wight. It is in the sub region of the Thames Valley, one of the most prosperous regions in the country, in the heart of Silicon Valley and about 20 miles west of London. This strategic location, together with a comprehensive transport and communications infrastructure, is key to the area's development.

Heathrow Airport is half an hour away. London Paddington can be reached from Maidenhead in 20 minutes and Reading in 15 minutes. Windsor and Ascot are on the London Waterloo line with direct connections to the Continent. The M4 runs East/ West through the Royal Borough and the M25 crosses the eastern tip of the Royal Borough, while the, M3 and M40 are within easy access. The two main urban centres, eight miles apart, are linked by the A308 but have few cultural and historical links. The Royal Borough has an essentially rural character, with more than 1000 acres of National Trust land, 5000 acres of Crown land (Windsor Great Park is a protected area of international importance) and 84% of the Royal Borough designated green belt. However, it is relatively densely populated with 687 people per square kilometre compared to 424 for the South East Region, although most people live in the two urban centres of Windsor and Maidenhead, with Maidenhead being twice the size of Windsor. There are 15 rural parishes, one of which includes the Royal Borough's third town, Ascot.

The Royal Borough's economic buoyancy is reflected in sustained levels of economic growth and low unemployment. Latest statistics show that Gross Domestic Product per head for Berkshire was £19,008 compared to £13,731 for the SouthEast and £12,548 for the UK. Unemployment also remains at a very low level at only 1.1% in the Royal Borough (850 claimants) compared to 3.3% nationally.

As a result of continued economic prosperity, the area attracts a variety of business activities. A strong small business sector generally indicates a healthy and diverse local economy and in the Royal Borough small businesses account for 94% of all businesses. Many leading UK and multi-national companies have also invested heavily in the area; 26 of the SouthEast's top 500 companies have their main offices here, with additional 15 companies having a presence in the Royal Borough.

A strong local economy and continued investment has led to a significant increase in employment levels in recent years, from a total workforce of about 58,000 in 1991 to over 66,000 in 1998, with undoubted further increases since then. Tourism is worth £319 million to the Royal Borough per annum and makes up 12% of its GDP. Employing over 9000 people, it is perhaps the largest sector of employment, in volume terms, in the Royal Borough.

Grenfell Island, in the centre of Maidenhead, is part of a larger £90 million development by Castlemore and is one of the most significant developments in the Thames Valley in recent years. It consists of a new leisure complex, together with 112,000 sq.ft of office space.

4.3. Our People

The Royal Borough is a community of communities, including residents, business people and students. It is rich and diverse, made up of people with different interests and needs and cultural backgrounds. Of its 137,000 inhabitants, living in 54,000 households, 5% are from an ethnic minority and approximately 20% are under 16, which reflects the national average. The largest minority ethnic community is from the Indian sub continent and is concentrated in two wards in Maidenhead (25% of all 0-4 years olds are from an ethnic minority background in these two wards). Interestingly, over 10% of the Royal Borough's pupil population are of South Asian Origin, reflecting the national trend of a higher proportion of young people within these communities. The minority ethnic population is more likely to suffer health problems, have low wages and experience barriers to participation.

The population of the Royal Borough is predicted to decline slightly over the next five years (in contrast to the national population, which will rise). In line with national trends, the number of young people will decline slightly and the number of people in the 45+ age group will increase, particularly in the 85+ category. Despite the reduction in numbers of people, the number of households will increase as the traditional family unit declines.

In general, the population is affluent, healthy and mobile. The local workforce is well educated and highly qualified, with 13% of the Royal Borough's adult residents qualified to degree level, compared with a national figure of 7%. 55% of households are employed in either the professional or managerial/technical social classes compared to 38% in Great Britain. However, there are significant pockets of deprivation. The general high standard of living can mask these more deprived areas, hiding their social and economic problems and increasing the divide between rich and poor.

Population Change in the Borough compared with nationally

		2001		2006	2001 - 2006 % Change
RBWM	0-15 yrs	25,689	19%	23,779	-7.4%
	16-44 yrs	52,662	39%	51,151	-2.9%
	45-74 yrs	47,435	35%	48,736	+2.7%
	75+ yrs	9,845	7%	10,619	+7.9%
	All ages	135,631	100%	134,285	-1.0%
England	0-15 yrs	10,063,400	20%	9,775,100	-2.9%
	16-44 yrs	20,239,900	41%	20,101,200	-0.7%
	45-74 yrs	15,853,200	32%	16,857,900	+6.3%
	75+ yrs	3,714,300	7%	3,792,300	+2.1%
	All ages	49,871,100	100%	50,526,300	+1.3%

Sources

RBWM figures are 1999-based projections from the Berkshire Population Model.

England figures are the 1996-based population projections from the Office for National Statistics.
These figures do not total exactly, because of rounding.

Levels of cultural activity within the Royal Borough are high, with many clubs and societies and sports participation is higher than the national average.

Volunteers are the backbone of the cultural sector. They get involved in all aspects of cultural life and indeed, it would be impossible even to list the number of voluntary organisations that exist with the Royal Borough. It is essential that community support is provided for these groups.

In the sports field, the vast majority of sports clubs are run on a voluntary basis. In the arts field, both arts centres rely heavily on volunteers and Maidenhead Arts alone represents over 50 voluntary arts organisations. There are two civic societies, a thriving shopmobility scheme and charities such as People to Places, which help people with restricted transport to access cultural opportunities. Volunteer organisations provide most of the heritage opportunities within the Royal Borough. They are experts at working with excluded groups.

With 240 voluntary and community organisations on their register, much of the voluntary activity is co-ordinated in the Royal Borough by Windsor and Maidenhead Voluntary Action. A recent "Valuing Volunteers" survey showed that just 24 of these voluntary organisations total the economic value of their volunteers at £3million per annum to the local economy.

4.4. Cultural Portrait of the Royal Borough

4.4.1 The Arts and Creative Industries

The Royal Borough has varied activities across all the art forms, especially music and theatre. The four main theatres, seating 1000 people between them, have different characters and cater for different audiences.

Windsor's historic Theatre Royal caters for both locals and visitors. Productions are of a very high standard, often transfer to the West End and attract well known actors. Windsor Arts Centre was founded in 1981 as a community facility and is run by a professional team supported by volunteers with expertise in different disciplines. It successfully promotes a programme of professional work alongside community activity including comedy, film, theatre, music, children's events and classes for all ages.

The Novello Theatre in Sunninghill is leased to Redroofs Theatre School (formerly home to Ivor Novello) and is a specialist children's theatre.

Maidenhead's recently opened Norden Farm Centre for the Arts cost £9m which was funded primarily by the Arts Lottery and topped up by community fundraising and Royal Borough grants. It has two theatres and promotes professional touring productions as well as hosting local amateur productions. It works closely with local organisations and schools to enhance links with the community through its outreach work.

A further 1800 seats are provided in other venues across the Royal Borough, including the Chapter Garden of Windsor Castle which hosts many events including the annual open air Shakespeare production mounted by the Windsor Theatre Guild, and Eton College also has some superb facilities which are used for public performances.

It is anticipated that a new Civic Quarter will be developed to replace the existing Town Hall. Alternative developments and facility options for groups currently using the Desborough Suite will be considered across the Royal Borough.

Through the Royal Borough's Advantage Card, residents have free access to one of the country's greatest art collections in Windsor Castle, as well as the State Apartments, Queen Mary's Dolls House and St Georges Chapel, all part of the attractions of a visit. Discounts are also available for Advantage Cardholders to visit the unique Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham and many other venues.

Other nearby arts venues include South Hill Park at Bracknell, the Swan at High Wycombe and the Hexagon at Reading.

In 2000/2001 Southern Arts gave £76,500 to Royal Borough based arts projects and the Royal Borough gave out arts grants worth £190,000.

There are many amateur societies making use of school, village and church halls, 57 of which come under the umbrella of Maidenhead Arts Council, including the Windsor and Maidenhead Symphony Orchestra, Royal Free Singers, Windsor and Eton Operatic Society, Riverside Players, Quince Players in Sunninghill and the Maidenhead Players. The value of voluntary arts organisations

operating through out the Royal Borough is recognised in the number of successful groups and their overall contribution to the arts.

Schools continue to provide many of the first experiences of art in its different forms for our young residents. The curriculum encourages the use of cross-curricular work for which the creative, visual, musical and performing arts makes a significant contribution. Schools are now able to apply for Arts Specialist status presenting significant opportunities for community arts initiatives. Cross-curricular experiences continue in the work undertaken by Youth and Community staff and voluntary groups in the development of young people out of school.

There is one multiplex cinema in Maidenhead. Exhibition and gallery space in the Town Centre is limited. Two local radio stations and four local newspapers cover the Royal Borough. The Maidenhead Advertiser is a charity, founded in 1869. The Windsor and Ascot area is served by both the Express (founded in 1812) and the Observer (founded in 1833) and Ascot is also served by the Ascot Times. The local papers are the most popular way of finding out about local issues and leisure activities, there is no doubt that they all play a key role in the cultural life of the Royal Borough.

In the past, the Royal Borough has identified a lack of small commercial units for artists and craftsmen to develop their work, although Eton High Street and Cookham contains some interesting shops selling arts and crafts. Consultees for the strategy valued artistic and individual shops greatly, expressing the hope that more should be done to encourage and support them.

The Royal Borough has a public art policy, which encourages property developers to spend a percentage of their budget on art for public enjoyment.

The following list is a summary of comments raised through the consultation process, many of which are addressed in the Strategy Action Plans:

- To help to bridge generation gaps between school children and adults and retired people. Not all clubs and associations readily cater for all ages.
- To expand the use of school halls and other venues for rehearsals and performances at an affordable cost for voluntary groups
- To link with other local authorities to develop joint projects
- For the Council to continue to enable the development of the arts in support of the community.
- Support for volunteers in the form of a central resource centre and other initiatives like a central booking services for arts organisations
- Using the Internet to its full potential for information on cultural opportunities and online booking of cultural events

4.4.2 Countryside and Landscape

The jewel in the Royal Borough's crown is the River Thames. It meanders through 22 miles of the Royal Borough including stretches of great scenic character such as the steep wooded slopes between Maidenhead and Bisham and those with historic associations such as at Ankerwycke opposite Runnymede, where, by the 1000-year-old yew tree, it is rumoured that the Magna Carta was sealed and where Henry VIII wooed Anne Boleyn.

The river is also a huge recreation resource providing facilities for fun activities as varied as canoeing, rowing, windsurfing, sub aqua, walking, angling and boating. It is estimated that Hurley Lock, alone, welcomes 160,000 visitors annually, despite a lack of basic facilities such as public toilets. We will be working with the Environment Agency to develop a plan to improve the facilities at this lock. The weir at Hurley is a canoeing site of national importance.

A very high proportion of the land in the Royal Borough is green belt, and a high proportion is owned by the Crown Estate or the National Trust. The National Trust is an important landowner since it also contributes much to the culture of the area, with important public benefits resulting from covenants over Ockwells Manor and Goswells.

Much of the Council's work centres on increasing awareness and appreciation of the natural environment through Braywick Nature Centre and the Ecobus. The Ecobus is a unique resource, aiming to raise awareness of how the way we live can damage the earth and its people and encouraging the adoption of sustainable lifestyles. It operates a programme of visits to schools, public events and other venues. Braywick Nature Centre, housed in a converted 19th century stable block, was opened in the late 1980's. The adjacent park includes a reclaimed landfill site, which today is an excellent example of nature's powers of regeneration coupled with active countryside management. This site and other parts of Braywick Park provide a resource for environmental education activities for the community.

There are 6 local nature reserves within the Royal Borough at ranging from Bisham Woods, also a site of special scientific interest, to the Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve at Horton. This is a superb example of a predominantly water-oriented reserve created on a formerly polluted site.

There has been an increasing interest and involvement of voluntary support from individuals and groups which has made a significant contribution to the ongoing success of many local projects. This support is anticipated to grow as awareness continues to rise.

The following list is a summary of comments raised through the consultation process, many of which are addressed in the Strategy Action Plans:

- For greater emphasis on appreciation of nature and the natural environment during school time as well as accessible holiday activities.
- For publicity for the work of conservation volunteers and tree wardens
- For wildlife corridors for safe movement of all forms of wildlife
- The need to maintain the network of footpaths and encourage landowners to allow public access. This is balanced by the need to ensure that the public respect the countryside and the rights of way.
- To maintain and develop environmental education, especially for children
- Working with other local authorities, particularly on schemes in connection with the River Thames
- To create linked access to the Jubilee River (Thames Flood Alleviation Scheme).

4.4.3 Festivals

During the consultation for this strategy, local people clearly identified that they would like to see more carnivals and festivals.

"Festivals bring together local communities, give a high profile to a town.....bring the experience of the arts to new audiences and help to define and articulate a sense of place"

The Cultural Cornerstone, June 2001

The annual Maidenhead Carnival is one particular success story, which is organised by the community for the community and sponsored by local businesses and the Royal Borough. There are also very successful carnivals in Old Windsor as well as the traditional Knowl Hill Steam Fair and Littlewick Green Fair. Many of these community events owe their continued success to local volunteers.

Consultees of the strategy stressed the need for the Council to act as an enabler rather than a direct provider of festivals, through helping local organisers with promotion. It was also commented that more activities and events be held in all parts of the Royal Borough including the villages.

The Windsor Festival has been held every September for the last 20 years. It uses a variety of venues, including the State Rooms of Windsor Castle and includes a high quality classical music programme with complementary lectures and other events. The Windsor Fringe complements the Festival providing a varied programme of new and exciting work in community venues throughout Windsor.

Other local events and festivals include:

- Windsor Dog Show
- Royal Windsor Horse Show
- Royal Ascot
- Local antique Fairs
- Windsor Fashion week
- Sunningdale Park Music & Arts weekend
- Royal Windsor Flower Show
- National Hunt racing at Ascot
- Flat racing at Ascot
- Sunningdale Carnival
- Regattas

4.4.4 Heritage, Museums and Galleries

The Royal Borough has no single permanent museum and many people feel that this is a missing piece from the cultural jigsaw of the Royal Borough. Others feel that the Royal Borough's heritage is too diverse for a single museum to be either representative or a success. However, an extensive local heritage collection is housed currently at Tinkers Lane depot in Windsor, overseen by a Heritage Development Officer and five regular volunteers and open to the public on Wednesdays and by appointment at other times. The Royal Borough Museum Collection (RBMC) has around 6000 items relating to the Royal Borough, its towns and villages, its civic, social and family life, its trade and industries, churches, schools, military and royal connections.

Loans from the RBMC are on display at various sites around the Royal Borough. The Friends of the RBMC would like to develop the existing scheme to set up a Heritage Resources Centre to benefit local societies, schools and residents. The RBMC also administers the Town and Crown exhibition in Windsor High Street, which plots the history of Windsor Town through the ages.

Investigations are currently underway to examine the feasibility of a Heritage Resource Centre in the Royal Borough, as part of the development of a heritage strategy. This could include plans to ensure appropriate exhibition space in Maidenhead and Windsor, evaluate the use of space in the Town and Crown, and examine the potential to incorporate new technology interpretation, for example, a touch screen multimedia database of a selection of objects from the Royal Borough's Museum Collection could be created.

Maidenhead Heritage Trust (MHT) is an independent voluntary charity, which established the Maidenhead Heritage Centre in 1993. Housed in a recently refurbished unit in the Nicholsons Shopping Centre in Maidenhead, it had over 11,000 visitors in 2000 and offers a heritage/ museum service for Maidenhead and the northern parishes. It is open 6 days a week throughout the year, and offers exhibitions on local historical and cultural themes, incorporating objects from the Trust's own collection or borrowed from the Royal Borough's Collection or other bodies. MHT's collection exceeds 1200 items and also includes a reference archive of books and photographs. Future plans include launching a website, expanding the Trust's outreach programme and finding permanent premises in the central shopping area of Maidenhead.

Within the Royal Borough other independent museums include:

- Royal Berkshire Yeomanry Museum which displays artefacts connected with the Life Guards and the Blues and Royals dating from the reign of Charles II
- Clewer Museum of Local and Church History; attached to the parish church of St Andrews and run by volunteers
- Museum of Eton College Life; based at the College and displaying artefacts from the school's history
- Eton College Natural History Museum
- Myers Museum (of Egyptology); a collection brought back from Egypt by an old Etonian
- Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham.
- St George's Chapel Muniment Room

The Royal Borough supports voluntary and independent heritage organisations in order to improve access to local history. In addition, the Royal Borough has adopted the blue plaque scheme to acknowledge sites of particular historical significance and interest.

The Royal Borough has 23 Grade I listed buildings and a further 1500 Grade II. Many of the centres of our towns and villages are protected as conservation areas to ensure that any future development is sympathetic. There are 17 scheduled ancient monuments and 4 historic parks and

gardens. Windsor Castle obviously tops this list, but other major buildings of national significance include the Windsor Guildhall (completed by Sir Christopher Wren), Bisham Abbey, Frogmore House and Mausoleum (final resting place of Queen Victoria) and Eton College.

The Local Plan determines policies relating to Conservation areas and Listed Buildings. The Royal Borough has a significant role in archaeology and the production of Conservation Area statements. This strategy aims to work with the Local Plan to continue to enhance the current range of interesting designs, protect our architectural heritage, and support initiatives to promote good design which supports the Windsor Facelift Scheme.

The strategy action plans address many of the key issues relating to heritage. There is a significant degree of local interest in the future of heritage in the Royal Borough, with many active groups. The key concern is the need to find an appropriate exhibition space for the Royal Borough Museum Collection and for both Windsor and Maidenhead to be represented in a celebration of the Royal Borough's cultural heritage. The development of the Civic Quarter in Maidenhead and the preparation of a heritage strategy for the Royal Borough may address these concerns. Arts development work and heritage activities when fully integrated will provide a service which has the potential to reach all sectors of the community.

4.4.5 Libraries and Information

There are two main libraries at Maidenhead and Windsor, with eight branch libraries serving smaller communities across the Royal Borough. The container library visits four sites each week and two mobile libraries make 52 stops over a three-week period. In addition a service is delivered to people in their own homes and at sheltered housing complexes or homes for the elderly.

The libraries attract 613,000 visits every year, reflecting the vital part which they play as a focal point for local arts and cultural activities in the community. All now have free access to the Internet. There will be increased opportunities for access to electronic information and improving ICT skills through libraries with the development of the People's Network funded Community Learning & Information Centres in three of the libraries and Community Learning & Information Points in the remaining eight.

Libraries play a vital role in supporting the arts and learning across the Royal Borough. They provide venues for exhibitions, performances and other cultural experiences as well as information about what's on. In the past they have even provided venues for exercise classes.

Public libraries act as a gateway for information about regional, national and European issues as well as more local ones. They have been described as "street corner universities", "the cornerstones of a civilised democracy" and "wonderful stores of imagination and learning". One of the key issues for the future of the service will be to provide for all groups, including the housebound, to ensure social inclusion and access for all.

The Royal Borough libraries form the 'community memory bank', housing local studies sections which complement the work of the Royal Borough Museum Collection, Maidenhead Heritage Centre and the many voluntary sector groups involved in the Royal Borough's heritage. The Royal Borough Library & Information service is leading on a lottery funded project to deliver a one stop Website for information and historical images, video & sound clips relating to the River Thames. Thames Pilot is a two-year project involving a dozen organisations along the river.

The annual library plan sets out the aims and objectives of our public libraries. Its four key objectives are:

- To enhance the quality of life
- To provide opportunities to realise full potential
- To provide equality of access
- To offer support for cultural, learning and leisure aspirations.

The Berkshire Record Office, based in Reading, houses the Royal Borough's archives. Covering the official, commercial and social history of the Royal Borough, some of the records are now available via the Internet. The Royal Borough is also home to several libraries of educational institutions as well as private libraries and archives such as those of Eton College, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Ascot Racecourse and the Royal Library at Windsor Castle. Major companies based in the Royal Borough will also house archives, libraries, information services or knowledge management sections.

Comments raised through the consultation process are identified within the Annual Library Plan.

4.4.6 Parks and Open Spaces

The Royal Borough boasts a wealth of managed parks and open spaces, ranging from small grassy patches to riverside and ornamental gardens, such as Ray Mill Island in Maidenhead, Alexandra Gardens and Baths Island in Windsor, to large sites such as Home Park in the shadow of Windsor Castle. Many of the parks house sports facilities for cricket, football and tennis and some are adjacent to allotments. Some sites were once part of large estates, such as Braywick Park in Maidenhead. Some Parish sites were created to celebrate a specific event, such as Victory Fields in Sunninghill and Jubilee Field in Bray.

Many open spaces have children's playgrounds. Kidwells Park in Maidenhead and Vansittart Recreation Ground in Windsor have skateparks, mainly catering for teenagers, and there is a Millennium Teenscene activity park in Old Windsor

In the 1990s a Parks Strategy was developed and implemented, with a rolling programme of investment so that most of the Royal Borough owned parks are relatively well maintained. Parks and open spaces in the town centres are managed by the Royal Borough, the remainder by the parish councils.

In line with Local Agenda 21, our parks are managed with the environment in mind and parks like Ockwells Park in Maidenhead and Sutherland Grange in Windsor are actively managed to protect plants and wildlife. We also encourage local community involvement in the management of our community woodlands and wildlife areas.

Two of the most visited areas in the Royal Borough are Windsor and Maidenhead riversides, both favourite spots for a Sunday stroll. Both areas have had "face-lifts" recently, and there are plans to further enhance Windsor Riverside in the future.

The recently published Open Space Strategy has identified deficiencies in open space or recreation facilities within the Royal Borough. There is a need to balance local open space with practical reality, and ensure residents have access to open space further afield. We will endeavour to enable access for all residents to suitable open space within walking distance of their homes where practical. Parks and open spaces remain a crucial factor in enhancing the quality of life for residents in the Royal Borough.

Allotments are areas of public land located throughout the Royal Borough, contributing to the local open landscape and providing extended home gardening facilities for many of our residents. The allotments in Windsor are managed by a voluntary association, who provide the infrastructure and day to day administration.

Wild flowers in Braywick Park,
Maidenhead

4.4.7 Places of Worship

There are over 65 places of worship altogether in the Royal Borough, including churches, a mosque, a synagogue and a Sikh temple, reflecting many different faiths and creeds including churches. The Royal Borough has good connections with religious groups and has worked with both the Islamic Trust of Maidenhead and River Church on youth projects recently. One third of school pupils attend church schools.

Places of worship can be visitor attractions in their own right as well as providing modern day venues for meetings and arts activities. Much of their activities are supported through volunteers, without which many community initiatives would not come to fruition.

The oldest building in the Royal Borough is the Church of St Andrew in Clewer Village. St Georges Chapel has become the traditional burial place of monarchs, including Henry VIII. The parish church of St John the Baptist in Windsor provides a focal point of social activity in the town and hosts many concerts and recitals. Holy Trinity is the garrison church in Windsor and has many historical military connections and artefacts. In Maidenhead the parish church of St Mary's is the venue for civic ceremonies. Many of the outlying parishes hold hidden treasures. A window in the parish church in Horton commemorates John Milton's famous poem Paradise Lost, for the poet lived here in the 1630s and his mother is buried in the churchyard. Bisham Church houses the remains of the Hoby family who lived at Bisham Abbey for generations and Lady Hoby is reputed to haunt the Abbey to this day.

4.4.8 Schools and Colleges

Schools and colleges provide many cultural opportunities in the Royal Borough. Many are, or could become, important community cultural facilities.

There are approximately 24,000 children at school in the Royal Borough attending 64 maintained and 17 independent schools. There are three beacon schools. All schools in the Royal Borough make a significant contribution to cultural diversity, having a major influence on the lives of not only pupils but also the whole community. Specialist schools have a particular role in developing opportunities for art, sport, technology or language both in the curriculum and for a range of extra curricular and community programmes. Windsor Boys School is now a Specialist Arts College, and Charters School is now a Specialist Sports College. The successful outcomes of these applications and future applications by other local schools will enhance the provision of community leisure and cultural opportunities.

The Royal Borough's further education colleges form part of the Lifelong Learning Partnership. Berkshire College of Agriculture has an excellent outreach adult education programme and is widening its horizons to become more generalist and less specialist. East Berkshire College is in discussions with the Royal Borough and other community organisations to provide badly needed new premises for exhibition space in Windsor.

The following list is a summary of comments raised through the consultation process, many of which are addressed in the Strategy Action Plans:

- The need for more after school and homework clubs, not necessarily on school premises
- The need to ensure that future refurbishment on school sites is accessible to the community and suitable for multiple use.
- Introduce structures to support voluntary youth organisations
- Development of young people's sexual health services across the Royal Borough
- Develop young people's involvement in the democratic process
- Further development of outreach and detached work with young people at risk across the Royal Borough
- Further development of mentoring support for young people

4.4.9 Sport and Recreation

Participation levels in the Royal Borough are higher than the national average. The top five sports for adults are Swimming; Cycling; Aerobics; Golf and Tenpin Bowls (Leisure Survey April 99). The top five sports for young people are Swimming, Cycling, Football, Hockey and Tenpin Bowls (Leisure Survey 1999). Young people also play tennis, rounders, netball and basketball regularly at school (School Sport Survey 2001).

There are approximately 200 voluntary run sports clubs, two large leisure centres (the Magnet and Windsor) as well as three private health clubs and two small dual use sports centres at Charters school in Ascot and Churchmead school in Datchet. Some large companies have their own in-house fitness facilities, such as Nortel in Maidenhead and Computer Associates near Datchet.

Major sports venues include Dorney Lake, Thames Valley Athletics Centre, Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, Windsor and Ascot Racecourses and Wentworth and Sunningdale golf courses. The River Thames is in itself also a major resource for many sports, including amongst others jogging, canoeing and rowing. The Royal Windsor Horse Show, the Windsor Half Marathon, the Royal Windsor Triathlon and the Real Tennis World Championships are four of a number of annual international sporting events that take place within the Royal Borough.

Sport in the United Kingdom is heavily reliant upon volunteers as administrators, coaches and helpers to operate clubs and activities throughout the year. The Royal Borough is no different, but suffers from the benefit of an above average number of local organisations per head of population, which adds to the need for more volunteers to continue their successful operation.

There are approximately 200 grass playing pitches, the main concentration being at Braywick in Maidenhead and Home Park in Windsor. There are Artificial Turf Pitches at Windsor Boys and Girls Schools, Altwood School and Bisham Abbey. There has recently been a major expansion of outdoor basketball facilities through the English Basketball Association initiative and two new skateparks opened in summer 2001.

There are relatively fewer facilities in the south of the Royal Borough, but residents are not constrained by administrative boundaries, and have access to quality facilities in neighbouring areas.

Windsor showcased its sports facilities during the Thames Valley Youth Games, with 3000 young people from 16 local authorities, participating in 10 sports over one weekend in June 2000.

Sports Development is primarily delivered through two new initiatives, the School Sport Programme and Active Sports. The School Sport Programme works closely with schools and leisure centres to support the provision of sporting opportunities for young people, including after school sports clubs, tournaments, festivals and talent development groups. Active Sports is a national scheme which focuses on our local voluntary sports clubs and coaches to develop high quality sporting provision and coaching opportunities enabling young people to reach their potential in their chosen sports. It

also includes accreditation for schools (Activemark for Primary schools and Sportsmark for secondary schools) which provide particularly strong programmes for pupils and the community.

The Youth Sport Trust's national TOPS Programme also forms a large part of our work. The aim of this programme is to "develop and implement, in close partnership with other organisations, quality physical education and sport programmes for all young people aged 18 months to 18 years in schools and the community". The government initiative to create Specialist Sports Colleges recognises that sport in schools is very important and the link to community sports activities of equal value. All of the Royal Borough's secondary schools make their sports facilities available to the public outside school times. One of the aims of this strategy will be to increase the availability of school facilities to the wider community as well as working more closely with schools to develop sport. A school sports survey has just been completed and this information will be used to develop school sport. It is also widely recognised in the Royal Borough that the early pre-school years are essential for the development of essential foundation skills. The strategy will seek to incorporate and encourage a wide physical activity programme as well as sport.

The Royal Borough's Leisure Centres are second to none in the quality of their facilities and activity programme. The provision of the centres' after school and holiday activities for young people complement the individuals physical development initiated in the school sport programme and provides a continuum for sport throughout the Royal Borough. The Centres also act a venue for hosting regional and national sporting events, such as BAA Heathrow Thames Valley Youth Games, England v China Badminton International and National Schools Athletics Finals.

The outdoor education project based at Hurley Lock provides a specialist service primarily aimed at young people aged 11-21 within a youth development framework. It exists to introduce people to outdoor sports that promote active and healthy lifestyles, promote canoeing as a sporting activity and provide opportunities for young people to learn new skills and gain experiences and qualifications.

Other events for youth sport include the Biennial Twin Town Youth Sports, and the annual Goslar Youth Exchange, running since the late 1940s.

The following list is a summary of comments raised through the consultation process, many of which are addressed in the Strategy Action Plans:

- The local sports clubs play an invaluable part in the provision of sporting opportunities, and often need assistance with elements such as promotion and publicity and coaching.
- Many clubs need help to raise funds effectively for facilities and junior programmes
- Facilities for sports that make use of other facilities, such as road racing, need to be developed to improve safety
- It is important that two-way communication is maintained between schools and sports clubs. Opening up school facilities to provide affordable facilities for clubs is particularly important for retaining the interest of those ages 12-20 in sport
- The Royal Borough's current programme for 50+ residents could be expanded to include more coaching sessions

Sport remains a highly significant medium for bringing people together to celebrate and promote a sense of community, achievement and shared values. It lies at the heart of the cultural strategy and plays a major role in developing the sense of identity in the Royal Borough.

4.4.10 Visitor Management

The Royal Borough is home to many visitor attractions, with Windsor Castle and Legoland appearing in the UK's Top 20 (ETC 2000). LEGOLAND Windsor was the largest investor in tourism in England when it opened in 1996 at a cost of £84M and has invested steadily ever since, with visitor numbers rising from 1.1M in its first year to approximately 1.5M in 2000. Approximately one million people attend events in the Royal Borough each year - 210,000 of these coming in just four days for Royal Ascot. Our smaller attractions and events each attract between 5,000 visitors and 250,000 visitors per year. The Royal Borough has a visitor management strategy the aim of which is to manage visitors in order to achieve and sustain maximum economic and environmental benefit to all within the Royal Borough.

Attractions in and around the Royal Borough	
Air Forces, American Bar and Kennedy Memorials, Runnymede	Open Top Bus Tours
Ascot Racecourse	Polo, Smiths Lawn, Windsor Great Park
Boat trips	River Thames
Blue Badge Guided Tours	Runnymede
Carriage Rides, Long Walk, Windsor	Savill Garden
Changing of the Guard, Windsor Castle	St Georges Chapel, Windsor Castle
Cycling	Stanley Spencer Gallery, Cookham
Dining Out	Thames Path Walks
Dorney Court and nearby Dorney Rowing Lake	Theatre Royal, Windsor
Eton College	Windsor Arts Centre
Frogmore House, Home Park, Windsor	Windsor Castle
Heritage Walks	Windsor Great Park
Hire Boats	Windsor Guildhall
Legoland, Windsor	Windsor Leisure Centre
Magnet Leisure Centre	Windsor Racecourse
Multi Screen Cinema, Maidenhead	Windsor Royal Station
Norden Farm Centre for the Arts	

Developments in tourism continue apace:

- Windsor Castle has been at the forefront of the international media spotlight with its restoration after the fire, the opening of additional rooms, the Royal Wedding in June 1999, and the Queen Mother's 100th birthday in 2000. This will continue in 2002 with the celebrations for the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The pomp and pageantry of ceremonial processions for visiting royalty and heads of state will continue to bring the crowds to Windsor streets.
- LEGOLAND Windsor brings out a major new ride or show every year, as well as regular new smaller attractions
- Windsor Royal Station offered a completely new concept of shopping when it opened in 1997 and has since won British Council of Shopping Centres awards
- Al fresco dining and themed restaurants have added to the "eating out" experience across the Royal Borough and the trend is continuing
- The addition of the Dorney Rowing Lake and Thames Valley Athletics Centre will bring more visitors to sporting events
- Significant developments at both Ascot and Windsor Racecourses are expected to take place in the next few years.

Access to the Royal Borough is unmatched. Easy access to the major motorway networks means that 60% of the UK population is less than three hours from the heart of the Royal Borough. Direct rail connections to the Continent through Waterloo have inspired a new trend of European day visitors.

More than 7million people visit the Royal Borough each year for business or for pleasure, with about 10% staying overnight within the Royal Borough. About 65% of these visitors come from the UK and the other 35% from overseas. With the surge in the short break market in recent years, the Royal Borough, in partnership with local hotels has been well placed to offer excellent weekend breaks.

Through the Visitor Information Centres, PR and websites, information about the Royal Borough is now reaching over 25 million people per year.

The Visitor Management Forum tackles most visitor management issues in the Royal Borough and has representatives from each of the five sectors of the visitor industry: Attractions and Events; Retail and Dining; Accommodation; Infrastructure and Visitor Management, Marketing and Visitor Information Centres. One of the key strengths of visitor management and marketing is its strong relationships and partnership working both internally, within council units, and externally, with tourism organisations and local bodies such as the police and transport operators.

The following list is a summary of comments raised through the consultation process, many of which are addressed in the Strategy Action Plans:

- Improve communication to the public through media such as electronic noticeboards in the High Street

5. Funding

The Royal Borough provides core funding for the provision of leisure and cultural services within the Royal Borough. This includes, for example, the provision of libraries, leisure centres and the Royal Borough Collection and support in the form of grants for the two arts centres. The Royal Borough will continue to work in partnership with other cultural organisations whose aims and objectives are consistent with this strategy.

The Royal Borough's Capital and Revenue Grants Programme gives much needed financial assistance to the many and diverse voluntary and community groups who apply to it. In the financial year 2000/2001 this amounted to a total of £733,600 (including £18,400 from the Kidwells Trust administered by the Royal Borough). In addition, young people in the Royal Borough benefit from a small sports bursary grant scheme, which assists talented sports people to achieve their aims.

In recent years, the community has benefited from National Lottery funding to the total of over £15 million to improve the facilities and activities within the Royal Borough. The most significant of these are the awards for the Thames Valley Athletics Centre in Eton (£3.4M) and Norden Farm Centre for the Arts in Maidenhead (£5.8M). In addition to these two big awards, hundreds of smaller organisations have benefited from lottery funding including schools, village halls, youth groups, after school clubs, history projects and many more.

Total Lottery Funding coming into the Royal Borough January 1995 - September 2001	
Arts	£ 7,388,773
Community Fund	£ 1,245,617
Heritage	£ 281,457
Millennium	£ 9,591
New Opportunities Fund	£ 799,387
Sport	£ 5,523,131
TOTAL	£15,247,956

Libraries in the area have benefited greatly from a £500,000 New Opportunities Fund grant to improve access to the Internet for all local people.

Community and voluntary groups will continue to be encouraged to apply for lottery grants. However, as the Royal Borough is not designated a priority area, this will become increasingly more difficult. New sources of external funding should be explored so those local groups continue to have opportunities for new projects to improve the cultural life of the area.

The European Social Fund has also been of some benefit to the Royal Borough, particularly in the field of education and training. Both colleges have benefited from grants and the local Learning Partnership has recently received funding for a £60,000 project, which provides free, high quality training to small businesses.

The Royal Borough will continue to work in partnership to bring "added value" to capital projects. Indeed, the future development of some projects will rely on community partnerships bringing in financial resources. In addition, all not for profit cultural organisations will continue to look to the

business sector to continue sponsorship of projects such as Norden Farm and Royal Borough in Bloom in order to sustain cultural activity. The Government's new policy of Local Strategic Partnerships will also be explored in order to achieve this aim.

Improving the facilities for canoeists and walkers at Hurley Lock, where these children are learning to canoe for the first time, is a partnership project that might benefit from Lottery Funds.

6. Action Plans

A selection of Action Plans to address many of the issues raised throughout the Consultation process and implement our strategy are attached. They are grouped according to our key themes and encompass the full range of cultural services in the Royal Borough. They show:

- What the action is
- When the action should be completed
- Any partners involved

The plans not only show actions which are the responsibility of the Royal Borough, but also those of partner organisations and, indeed, anyone with an interest in improving the cultural well being of the Royal Borough.

The Action Plans show short and long-term priorities and will be updated on an annual basis. In time, we intend to develop the Action Plans to include:

- How they link to other plans and services
- The measure of their success.