

Relevant Extract from Lifelong Learning & Culture Service Plan for 2008/9

Developing a Vibrant Cultural Infrastructure

The drivers here are the City of Culture aims to make York:

- A City of International Significance
- A Diverse, Inclusive and Cosmopolitan City
- An Active and Participative City
- A Creative City
- A City of High Quality Spaces

We need to develop the necessary infrastructure to support these aims. Infrastructure means not just buildings but also the softer elements that contribute to cultural development, for example leadership, effective partnerships, community development.

York is a beautiful city with a wide range of cultural and heritage assets, excellent open spaces and a broad programme of cultural activity, festivals and events. York has a correspondingly high profile nationally and internationally drawing over 4 m visitors each year.

There is a strong sense of commitment, energy and goodwill across the cultural sector leading to innovative and creative provision. There are a number of strong functional partnerships enhancing cultural provision in the city.

Despite these strengths culture suffers a perceived lack of leadership which in turn diminishes the city's cultural ambition. There is scope to improve the effectiveness of our strategic partnership working.

Participation in the broadest range of cultural activity in York is high compared to regional and national data (see Household Survey and Active People). However, there remain whole swathes of citizens who do not get involved. This is particularly striking in active leisure where three quarters of the population are inactive. People continue to cite lack of knowledge of the opportunities available to them as a reason for not participating. There may also be a perception that there is a bias towards elitism in cultural provision and in some cases that activity is skewed towards visitors.

It is also clear that there is much more to do to address a lack of diversity in the city's cultural offer and to ensure that it addresses the needs of all sections of our community.

There are many potential opportunities to improve the built infrastructure, to address the gap between where we are now and what a "city of international significance" would look like in cultural terms. There is a huge investment requirement if, for example, our heritage institutions are to return to the cutting edge status they once held. And there is a real need to improve the public realm in the city.

The way forward is likely to centre on the opportunities as they arise, for example through York Northwest, Castlegate Piccadilly, St Mary's Precinct. However, it is essential that a clear vision is developed first to enable effective partnerships to be built, capable of advocating for and delivering provision in which everyone wants to participate, if these opportunities are to be grasped.

Actions:

	We will describe the cultural requirement for a city centre cultural action plan	30.06.08	Gill Cooper
Create a description of a vibrant cultural infrastructure for York which brings to life the strategic vision of Y@L	We will drive forward the cultural quarter as the key project that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ demonstrate the cultural sector contribution to place-making ▪ bring investment to the cultural infrastructure ▪ shape the cultural development of the city centre ▪ develop and showcase means of improving the public realm in the city promoting high quality design ▪ contribute practically to taking forward the city's heritage strategy 		
	Initial steps will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop an e-prospectus outlining the up to date vision and plans for the Cultural Quarter will be accessible from the major stakeholders' websites 	30.06.08	Gill Cooper
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop an outline business plan 	30.8.08.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ engage / consult with all the key partnerships / decision makers to advocate for the Cultural Quarter 	31.12.08.	
	We will scope major development sites to identify cultural requirements	30.12.08	Gill Cooper
We will ensure through process that local development framework needs of target groups are recognised	30.09.08	Charlie Croft	
Provocatively market cultural opportunities using	We will have a cross service arm marketing group to produce a strategy to use the latest digital technology to advertise cultural events and activities	31.03.09	Fiona Williams
	We will reinvigorate Yortime as a cutting edge community cultural information website	31.03.09	Fiona Williams

innovative, creative methods employing the very latest digital technology	We will produce a strategy to market the learning and cultural offer using the Council's GIS system	31.03.09	Fiona Williams
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