

‘Reasons to be Cheerful’

A Cultural Strategy

For

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

2006/07 to 2008/09

Contents

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| 1.0 Foreword to Cultural Strategy | 3 |
| 2.0 Summary | 4 |
| 3.0 Local Context | 7 |
| 4.0 Strategic Context | 25 |
| 5.0 Key Issues | 38 |
| 6.0 Strategic Aims | 42 |
| 7.0 Achievements | 45 |
| 8.0 Strategic Action Plan | 46 |
| 8.1 To increase access to and participation in cultural activity | |
| 8.2 To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough | |
| 8.3 To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities | |
| 9.0 Resources | 80 |
| 10.0 Equality and Diversity | 81 |
| 11.0 Community Cohesion | 82 |
| 12.0 Sustainability and Cultural Activities | 82 |
| 13.0 Performance Management | 83 |
| 14.0 Outcomes | 92 |
| 15.0 Appendices | 96 |
| 15.1 Achievements | |
| 15.2 SWOT Analysis | |
| 15.3 Glossary | |
| 15.4 Key Partnerships and Agencies influencing Cultural Strategy implementation | |
| 15.5 Cultural Strategy Strategic Perspective | |

1.0 Foreword to Cultural Strategy

I am delighted to be writing this foreword to the Dudley Borough Cultural Strategy as the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture at Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

Cultural activities are an important part of people's lives, providing opportunities for personal fulfilment and a healthy lifestyle while promoting social cohesion and community identity. They are important to the quality of life in Dudley Borough and make a significant contribution to the local economy. A high quality natural and built environment and a good range of facilities can raise the profile of the Borough to residents and visitors alike and promote local identity.

While Dudley is an area already rich in cultural resources and creative potential it is our belief that the true value and importance of culture and all that it embraces in our community is not properly understood or recognised. The future contribution that cultural development can make to the quality of life in Dudley Borough is therefore in danger of being overlooked.

In response Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council has moved culture up the political agenda and will work with its partners to develop and deliver high quality cultural facilities and services. The Cultural Strategy is intended to provide the framework for this process.

The Strategy demonstrates how culture is key to delivering the main themes of the Community Strategy and how it makes a fundamental contribution to the identities of the people of Dudley Borough and to the enrichment of their lives. The Cultural Strategy has been developed alongside the Community Strategy, ensuring that they are closely integrated in terms of aims, priority areas and delivery, and also links directly to the new Council Plan and the priorities contained therein.

This Strategy reflects the Council's aspirations for the Borough and its residents, using Culture as one of the means by which the quality of life will be improved for all and I look forward to working with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to see the vision and ambitions of the Strategy come to fruition.



Councillor Charles Fraser Macnamara
Cabinet Member for Leisure
Deputy Leader of Dudley MBC

2.0 Summary

Our Vision for Culture

The Vision for Culture in the Borough was established as part of the Dudley Borough Challenge exercise and the creation of the Community Strategy 2005 – 2020.

Within the overall vision of “Stronger Communities” the role and value of Culture has been clearly articulated. Throughout the consultation process undertaken to create the Strategy many people highlighted the value that they attached to the heritage and cultural life of the Borough including its many leisure and recreational facilities and activities as they contribute to the quality of life of residents. A particular emphasis was placed upon the provision of facilities and activities that meet the needs of children and young people.

Consequently the Culture Vision for the Borough is:-

‘To build on the real sense of pride, respect and belonging that stems from living in the Borough, by celebrating the physical heritage and varied cultural life of its people and enhancing its many leisure opportunities’.

In furtherance of this vision the Council, Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other partners have determined that the most impact can be achieved by focusing efforts to promote and improve access to leisure and cultural activities and support community interaction. In particular there are key objectives in relation to:

- Increasing the percentage of the population with good access to cultural, leisure and sports facilities.
- Building upon the range of sports, arts and leisure activities for children and young people and encouraging their participation in healthy, purposeful cultural activities.
- Improving the parks and open spaces of the Borough through improved design and layout to increase activity and use by all sections of the Community.

However, in addition to the ‘culture specific’ vision for the Borough, Culture and Cultural activities support other elements of the Community Strategy demonstrating the cross cutting nature of Culture.

In the context of ‘Creating a Prosperous Borough’ the value of leisure and tourism activity is clearly identified as a driver for inward investment and employment in the area. The ‘Promoting and Sense of Wellbeing and Good Health for Everyone’ agenda has very close alignment with Culture given that promoting and improving access to physical activity is one of the means by which improved health and wellbeing can be achieved.

The Borough Vision also focuses on the rich natural heritage of the area, in particular 'to promote and protect the heritage features that are a legacy of the Borough's geological and industrial past, for current and future generations'. Of particular significance in this context are the unique geological features, the highly prized natural areas and the glass industry, each of these being an essential part of the Cultural fabric of the Borough.

Finally, so far as the Borough Challenge and Community Strategy are concerned Culture impacts to support the vision of 'Making Dudley a Safe and Peaceful Place in Which to Live' in a number of ways. As previously noted improvement to parks and open spaces includes better design to encourage use and activity by all sections of the community whilst the provision of purposeful cultural activities and facilities for children and young people encourages the positive use of leisure time.

The importance of Culture to the 'Stronger Communities' agenda cannot be overstated. It has a value and priority in its own right but also acts to support the wider social agenda in a variety of ways. The purpose of this Strategy is to articulate the ways in which the Council's Cultural Service providers contribute to the Vision for Culture in the Borough, and identifies how it will prioritise its resources to that end and how it will measurably demonstrate the impact that it is having on the lives of all Borough residents. In translating the Borough Culture Vision into the Council's Cultural Strategy the following key strategic aims have been identified:-

- (i) To increase access to and participation in Cultural activity;
- (ii) To improve the quality and extend the range of Cultural activities available to Borough residents; and
- (iii) To stimulate the economic and social regeneration of communities through Culture.

By providing people with improved access to Cultural activities, with the aspiration of driving up participation rates in the whole community but with specific emphasis on low participation groups, will engender both individual and wider social benefits including improved health and wellbeing and a greater feeling of personal safety.

Specifically the Council is keen to see that participation in Cultural activity remains lifelong and across all sectors of society consequently providing for the needs of older people, people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and those who are economically disadvantaged is a particularly high priority for the Council and many of the actions on access and participation are focussed on this agenda.

The Council clearly wants to be a provider of high quality services, no more so than in the context of Cultural Services, which have a diverse and competitive market.

Participation will only be increased if the right products are available in the right places and meet the requirements of consumers. Consequently quality provision is critical to the achievement of this aim. Furthermore because Culture is such an area of personal preference it is important that the Council does what it can to offer services that have broad appeal. This is not to say that the Council can provide everything for everyone as resources will not extend to this, and some prioritisation will have to occur. That said the Council is aware that as the principal public provider of Cultural Services within the area it has a duty to make them as all embracing as it is possible to do so.

Finally it is important to recognise how Cultural activities contribute to both the economic wellbeing of the Borough, through tourism and skills acquisition and its social regenerative capabilities given the power of Cultural activities to generate a sense of pride and belonging within communities and provide a focus for community interaction leading to more cohesive neighbourhoods.

The Council's resources to support the aspirations of this Strategy are finite hence there needs to be transparency of prioritisation of actions. This has required the Council to take, and to continue to make, difficult decisions with regard to the use of these resources. Inevitably the product of these decisions will not be universally popular and it will be essential to refresh the Strategic Action Plan at regular intervals to ensure that it remains consistent with the Community Strategy and local needs.

As a rider to this the Council will utilise a partnership approach to deliver this Strategy. Whilst it is fundamentally a Council Strategy, the Council will work in partnership with other agencies to deliver the Vision for Culture in the Borough. In particular the Culture Thematic Partnership will have the responsibility for ensuring that the Cultural Vision for the Borough and the actions of this Strategy are delivered in an effective and timely fashion.

The aspiration of 'Stronger Communities' will only be achieved if Cultural Services plays a full part in delivery. This Strategy sets some challenging targets for the Council to meet in relation to levels of community participation in general, and low participant groups in particular. Key factors in the achievement of this challenge will be the ways in which the Council is able to re-shape service delivery to make it more relevant and responsive to the needs of individuals and communities without compromising on the quality of other provision and it follows that the Council's resources must be deployed to maximum effect requiring high levels of co-operative working across the Council. Whilst the Vision is long term in nature, to match the 2020 Vision of the Community Strategy, the Action Plan is for 3 years and will be subject to annual review.

3.0 Local Context

3.1 Heritage

The Borough of Dudley has unparalleled links between its natural heritage, community history and culture. This is our unique selling point.

The rocks below our feet in the Borough, our geological heritage, have controlled everything from where water supply is to be found to where we could find the resources for industry to where we put our canals and towns. The natural landscape is fundamentally and inextricably linked to our human history and the resulting cultures that now occupy the Borough. The character of the earliest built environment was dominated by the available rocks for construction and formed much of its building materials. Limestone was used as a building material from the Middle Ages onwards, a significant example being Dudley Castle and Dudley Priory.

Dudley is uniquely rich in mineral seams. Deposits of limestone, together with the thickest coal seam in the UK (the South Staffordshire Thick Coal) and up to 10 other coals in the Coal Measures, which also included rich ironstones, were at the heart of the Industrial Revolution and the development of its key technology. The first smelting of iron with coke was achieved by Dud Dudley in 1619, and went on to fuel the industrial development of the world through the 18th and 19th centuries via Abraham Darby born on Wrens Nest in 1678.

The geological heritage is a global treasure and totally unique. The limestone strata in Dudley contains the most diverse and abundant fossil fauna in the world. Wren's Nest, including the Seven Sisters limestone mine and features such as the Fossil Reefs and Ripple Beds, is considered by geologists and palaeontologists to be an invaluable and unique resource, its importance in British and World geological history without question, and has shaped the earth sciences across the globe. In recognition of its importance, Wren's Nest was declared the first geological National Nature Reserve, in 1956.

The raw materials extracted from the ground in Dudley were legion and founded all of its major industries. Doulton's Claypit, now an SSSI and part of a Local Nature Reserve, was excavated for fine clays where it was used for the production of baths and basins, and in brick making such as the production of the well known Staffordshire industrial bricks. Clay extraction for brick-making continues elsewhere in the Borough to this day, including until recently at Tansey Green, where young conifer trees were found fossilised in situ in volcanic ash erupted by the adjacent Barrow Hill volcano. In the Stourbridge area the very fine clays were abundant and provided the glass industry with what it needed to establish and settle.

To the north of the Borough ancient sandstones of a vanished delta plain were quarried as building stone, for grind stones and abrasives. Their pale honey colour gave this area the nickname of the seaside village of the Black Country and this rock is widely known as the Gornal Grit.

While the landscapes forged from natural processes acting on the different types of rock and the exploitation of the geological resource was a significant contributor to the distinctive development pattern of the Black Country, the legacy of abandoned extractive and industrial sites, along with Dudley's canal network, has given the Borough a distinctive present landscape and contributes to urban quality and recreational and amenity value.

There has been a tradition of glass-making in the Stourbridge area for the past 400 years. Since the 1800's the area has been nationally and internationally known for the production of high quality tableware and decorative glass, both clear glass and coloured. In the world of glass Stourbridge is as significant as Stoke on Trent is for the pottery industries. At the peak of glass production, around 1900, there were about a dozen glass manufactories based in Stourbridge, as well as a number of independent glass decorating workshops and ancillary businesses such as the manufacture of firebricks and refectories, pot-making, furnace building and tool-making. The industry was a major source of employment in the Borough and a world leader in glass production.

Following the First World War production became more focused on cut crystal. Stourbridge became a byword for this type of glass, which was exported all over the world. Today, in spite of a sharp decline in crystal manufacture over the last 20 years, there is still a considerable amount of glass activity in the area.

As well as traditional producers such as Tudor Crystal and Royal Brierley, there is a growing number of small glassmaking studios, based mainly at the Ruskin Glass Centre, the Red House Glass Cone and Broadfield House. Glassmaking is still taught at the International Glass Centre, Brierley Hill, (part of Dudley College) and in 2004 the first International Festival of Glass was organised, with the aim of celebrating Stourbridge's glassmaking achievements, past and present.

Broadfield House Glass Museum is the only local authority museum in the country devoted exclusively to glass – an indication of the importance that the Borough attaches to its glass heritage. The two other main glass centres in the UK – the World of Glass in St Helens (home of the Pilkington Glass Collection) and the National Glass Centre in Sunderland – are limited companies or part of university departments respectively, and charge for admission.

The permanent and temporary exhibitions at Broadfield House attract visitors from all over the country, while the majority of people visiting the web site are from the USA. The glass collection contains approximately 15,000 individual pieces (including long term loans) ranging from 17th century glass to present day work, with the main focus on glass produced in the local Stourbridge area. The collection of Stourbridge glass is the finest and most comprehensive in the world. The museum is supported by an outstanding glass library and archive collection, and is a major centre for research into 19th and 20th century glass. Enquiries are received from all round the world.

The Red House Glass Cone was restored and opened as a visitor attraction in 2000. It is one of only four remaining glass cones in the country and is the most complete, retaining its associated workshop buildings and canal side location. The Red House Glass Works, of which the Cone forms part, was the home of Stuart Crystal from 1881 and the Council today operates the site in partnership with its current owners Waterford Wedgwood. Attractions at the Cone include glassmaking demonstrations and temporary exhibitions, but the highlight of any visit is entering the Cone itself and experiencing the unique atmosphere inside this extraordinary building.

A Museum Service was originally established in the Borough when the Earl of Dudley funded the building of an Art School, Library and Art Gallery in 1884; this is today the Dudley Museum and Art Gallery (DM&AG) in St James's Road. There was no art collection to begin with, so the collection had to be built up from scratch. This was done using Public Subscription and other fund raising methods. Today the collection amounts to approximately 2000 works including: oil paintings, drawings and watercolour, engravings and etchings, and modern prints. A sizeable proportion of the collection consists of pictures of local interest including local views, people and industries. There is currently permanent space in the Art Gallery for displaying the Art Collection, but at least one exhibition is held each year, which utilises the Art Collection.

Dudley Museum and Art Gallery also houses the Brooke Robinson Museum and its diverse collection of paintings, furniture, sculptures, ceramics, oriental art and Greek and Roman pottery. The collection was created by Brooke Robinson, who was MP for Dudley from 1886 – 1906. The Brooke Robinson Museum is a registered charity and ownership is vested in a Board of Trustees.

Dudley Archives and Local History Service began in 1947 and the first archivist was appointed in 1972. A search room was opened in Dudley in 1980. The service was moved to a single site at Mount Pleasant School, Coseley in 1992 bringing together collections previously stored across the Borough. This site is now full and plans are in development to assess the feasibility of moving the archives to a modern fit for purpose new facility.

3.2 Arts and Entertainment

In 2003 an audit of arts activities was carried out, this revealed that, whilst there are no iconic arts venues in Dudley, there is an exceptionally high level and breadth of grass roots arts activity and participation. In addition it identified three strengths; the long established Dudley Arts Council (DAC), dance and visual arts.

In order to promote participation in arts the Council, in partnership with local voluntary groups, established the Dudley Arts Council in 1946. Although many authorities throughout the country established similar fora after the war many have not survived. Dudley is unique in sustaining such an active organisation and as a result can boast exceptional levels of participation in the arts. Currently there are over 30 affiliated organisations covering all aspects of the arts including theatre, operatic, visual, disability, literature and music. Grants of up to £500 are awarded by DAC to support new initiatives throughout the borough. It is estimated that the activities of DAC members generates in the region of £500k a year to the local economy.

In 2005 the Council worked with DAC to deliver a programme of technical training to affiliated groups. This has increased the skill and capacity of the groups and thereby improved performance standards.

Dance is prominent in the Borough as a result of the activities of Dudley Community Dance Consortium (DCDC), Dudley Performing Arts (DPA) and their dance amateurs. According to the Youth Dance Report 2006, "*DCDC is the only dedicated dance agency operating in the area*" and DCDC provides "*a coherent structure for the support and development of dance and youth dance*" making Dudley exceptional in the Black Country. Currently DCDC are setting up a group of elite advanced performers based at Stourbridge Town Hall, this group will be the showcase for the **DAiR To** project across the whole of the West Midlands using external Arts funding. This forms the basis of our aspiration to regenerate Stourbridge Town Hall by focusing on dance and dance performance.

In 2004 Dudley established the Leaps and Bounds project which aims to introduce 300 "young people at risk", from across the region, to the medium of dance through a programme of activity with the Birmingham Royal Ballet. In addition the project is being featured as part of a Channel 4 documentary which will receive nationwide screening in September 2006. It is anticipated that this project will be extended for a further couple of years.

The third strength identified through the audit, was the prominence of the visual arts. The establishment of the glass industry 400 years ago led to an influx of artisans from around the world to Dudley. As a result the area has a strong tradition of practitioners in the visual arts.

The survey revealed that there are a higher proportion of professional visual artists living in the Borough, than anywhere else in the West Midlands. This is evidenced by the existence of the formal Visual Artists Network (VAN) in the Borough and the long tradition of the Mid Art Exhibition. After discussions with Arts Council England, West Midlands, the Council has tasked VAN to lead on a new initiative to develop an annual visual arts festival that would take the legacy of Mid Art forward into the new millennium.

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council is recognised nationally for its promotion and provision of high quality public art, primarily through the successful Dudley Borough Public Artist and Public Art Initiative which has operated since 1989 and is now attached to the Regeneration Division of the Council. The project, which is based in the old Laundry Block at Himley Hall, has, over the 17 years since its inception, moved from strength to strength and received a number of significant awards for the quality of work produced, including the National Art Collections Fund Award “for an outstanding contribution to the visual arts” (1994), the Royal Society of Arts “Art and Architecture” Award (1993); and in 2005 the Council’s resident public artist was elected as an Associate member of the RBSA, the historic Midlands equivalent of the Royal Academy.

In general the Borough’s Public Artist has taken the lead in implementing the “Percent for Art”, the idea that at least one percent of the cost of a new capital project should be spent on art.

The most dramatically visible manifestation of this policy, realised in collaboration with the Council’s Highway Engineers and Landscape Architects, has been the creation of the Millennium Sculpture Trail along the Dudley Southern By-pass, completed in 2001, whereby the new £50m road scheme was enhanced with major sculptures to the value of £500,000, chosen after a national selection process and a hugely popular participatory public exhibition of designs and models in the Churchill Shopping Centre.

Notable works include Andrew Logan’s “Pegasus” with glass inlaid wings at Scotts Green Island, celebrating the glass industry and also intended as an optimistic image of the future of Dudley; as well as a “walkabout” trail of smaller sculptures celebrating the fossils and early history of Dudley by artists hailing from the region, such as John Vaughan, Michael Lyons or Michael Konu. Public art projects such as this one have led to many long term relationships with leading artists, for example internationally renowned sculptor and glass artist Andrew Logan returned to Dudley to give a “Masterclass” at the first Glass Biennale in 2004, and is returning again to create a grand finale parade, with fashion designer Zhandra Rhodes, for the 2006 Biennale.

A less immediately visually prominent but even more important percent for art scheme has been the provision, in partnership with the local NHS Trust, over a five year period (2001-2006), of public art commissions for the three new Hospital buildings built in Dudley (the Russells Hall, Corbett and Guest Hospitals). Here the public art has had a very important role to play in improving the environment for patients, staff and visitors- indeed there is now substantial medical evidence (compiled at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital) that a Hospital environment enhanced with artworks and greenery will actually help improve the speed of recovery of patients as well as simply “cheering them up”.

What started off as a small scale percent for art scheme has been expanded to a very large scale project involving substantial Arts Council funding and dozens of commissions including two major therapeutic works by the international Land Artist Chris Drury- the courtyard “Rivers of Stone” and the “Fingerprint Roof”, as well as smaller works such as floor and wall mosaics, murals, etched glass windows, bronze sculptures and banners. Through the project Dudley has effectively become a pioneer of contemporary visual art in a health care setting.

The success of the project has also led to the creation of a part time post for an Arts Development worker at the Hospital, primarily to supplement the Public Art Programme with events and exhibitions, which, following a very successful pilot year funded by the Arts Council, has been extended for the foreseeable future via donations from other charitable trusts.

The Council’s own public buildings have also benefited from ‘Percent for Art’ commissions organised by the Borough Artist for example two major works, a stained glass window by Jean Bailey and a stone sculpture by Ronald Rae at the Dormston School Arts and Sport Centre; or the more modest but equally effective enamel relief for the Red Hill School Science Block (designed by one of the pupils and realised and enabled by the Borough Artist).

Other important Community Art projects managed by the Borough Artist include the creation of the Belle Vue Sculpture Trail, especially for Primary School Children, in collaboration with the school and Education Department (1997) as well as assistance as a Lead Artist in the 2003 Saltwells “Impact” Project to place artists in residence in schools, in order to create a permanent artwork by the pupils, a spectacular bronze tondo relief of leaves that is now sited at the busy Merry Hill Shopping Centre.

Public Art is frequently integrated into Urban Design, for example as in the design of the new Stone St. Square for Dudley Town Centre or as integrated into canal side locations such as at Hawne Basin.

Another important aspect of the work of the Public Art Project and Borough Artist has been to organise artworks to commemorate local heroes in response to enthusiastic requests direct from the community (together with appropriate celebratory openings). In recent years for example this has led to a major two part commission celebrating the life of footballer Duncan Edwards for Dudley Market Place (1998 and 2005), a film strip sculpture commemorating actor Sir Cedric Hardwicke in Lye (2005), a relief to the Schindler-like figure of Frank Foley in Stourbridge (2004), and a refurbishment of the monument to Joe Darby the Victorian jumping champion in Netherton (for installation in 2006).

Harold Parsons noted in his definitive book on the Black Country published in the 1970s that Dudley appeared to be “short on statues” and thus an attempt has been made in recent years to respond to public requests, right the balance and celebrate some formerly neglected figures of national and international importance.

Through projects of this kind and the general work of the project, many local artists and fabricators are directly involved in the public art programme in addition to the resident public artist, thus providing a certain amount of small scale but important employment for talented local artists and fabricators, helping the local arts economy. The public art project also undoubtedly contributes to the overall image of the Borough as an attractive place for tourists to visit as well as making it a better place to live.

Public art is a corporate activity, however. The Council also has a proud record of successful delivery of public art through its Community Arts Team and Schools Advisory Services and for promoting the Borough as a welcoming place for artists to live and work independently of the Council.

The challenge to the Council is to move forward from this position. The Public Art Strategy sets out the Council’s approach to public art. It explains the founding principles of public art in the Borough; provides the Council’s definition of public art; outlines the corporate vision for public art in the Borough; sets out the delivery mechanisms for public art in the Borough; identifies public art agencies active in the Borough but external to the Council; lists funding and resourcing sources for its public art activities and sets objectives and an implementation schedule for future development.

Instrumental in the provision of the Strategy is recognition of the need to build on past success and to refine and direct public art corporately to improve upon and develop the Council’s approach, taking public art in the Borough into the new Millennium.

In 2004 the Council worked in partnership with Dudley Hospital Trust on a ground breaking arts initiative which made visual arts central to the design of the new Russells Hall Hospital. As a result of this the Trust has continued to fund an Arts into Health work at the hospital.

The Borough is also host to a centre for the Ruskin Mill Educational Trust (RMET) which is located in the former Webb's Glass factory in Amblecote, Stourbridge. RMET is an internationally recognised charity pioneering specialist education for young people with learning difficulties. The Glasshouse is one of three centres established by the Trust and sustains the charity's ethos of fostering education through arts, crafts, culture, land work and community regeneration.

The Glasshouse contains three individual but linked elements: the Glasshouse Arts Centre, Ruskin Glass Centre, and Glasshouse College.

The Glasshouse Arts Centre has a small but thriving cultural programme running from the Lehr Studio Theatre, particularly focusing on drama, storytelling, eurythmy and music. An international Mask Centre is in the pipeline, building on a successful series of productions and mask summer schools in previous years. This will be a key feature in the new arts centre development, converting a dilapidated glasshouse into a multi-use space, with a large performance/exhibition space, eurythmy studio, conference/arts cinema facilities and additional workshops. Students from Glasshouse College have the opportunity to work alongside professional actors, tour productions, and learn backstage and technical skills as part of their curriculum.

The Ruskin Glass Centre honours the heritage of the old factory site by providing workshop space for glassmakers and craftspeople and is an increasingly popular visitor destination. Current development plans will provide additional incubator units, fully equipped managed workspaces and a series of recreational and accredited glass courses, establishing the centre as one of the key locations in Stourbridge's historic Glass Quarter, along with Red House Glass Cone and Broadfield House Glass Museum.

The importance of raising the profile of Stourbridge's glass community was a driver in the formation of the International Festival of Glass in 2004. Taking place every two years it attracts thousands of people, including a strong global contingent. It features the British Glass Biennale, a prestigious exhibition showcasing contemporary glass by artists based throughout the UK, which attracts many entries from local glassmakers as well as nationally. The festival invites world renowned artists to run classes and share their skills, culminating in free demonstrations to the public. The festival is a celebration of Stourbridge as a centre of excellence for glass making.

Whilst the area is no longer at the forefront of commercial glass production at a mass scale, the future for the local glass industry lies in production of high quality studio glass pieces.

The Council recognises the need to support this transitional process, by supporting not only this showcase Festival but also by providing affordable studio facilities in the area and encouraging increased sales of contemporary glass. For this reason the Council provides financial support to the Festival and created studio accommodation as part of the restoration of the Red House Glass Cone.

The International Festival of Glass and the British Glass Biennale are part of the area's rich tapestry of local cultural activities. Building on this, the Glasshouse Arts Centre, in partnership with DMBC, is co-ordinating a Stourbridge Theatre Festival every two years, alternating with the International Festival of Glass. This will bring together Dudley based professional companies such as Fizzog and Saltmines Trust with international artists alongside local amateur groups in a number of venues including the Stourbridge Town Hall.

The Council recognises the importance of working in collaboration with other key stakeholders to promote the arts both locally and sub-regionally. With this in mind the Authority is subscribing to the Black Country Arts Partnership (BCAP) which was established in 2005.

The Borough has 5 Public Halls: Stourbridge Town Hall, Dudley Concert Hall, the Cornbow Hall, Halesowen, Netherton Arts Centre and Brierley Hill Civic Hall. Most of these buildings date back to Victorian times and all are in prime town centre locations. They all host a very wide range of events, ranging from small private family hires, to large professional musical concerts. School activity, concerts, awards evenings and dance events account for a significant proportion of the bookings. All the Halls have large dance floors and attract dance competitions and regular dance classes from amateur and professional hirers.

The long-term strategy for the Halls is to maintain and improve their physical infrastructure and the quality of the services provided at all the venues but to focus delivery of the Council's major entertainment programme of cultural activities at Dudley Concert Hall and Stourbridge Town Hall.

Dudley Concert Hall has a large concert stage and thus specialises in musical events. With a maximum seating capacity of up to 1008 this venue is host to the major events in the annual entertainment programme. This venue was extensively renovated and redecorated in 2003 which included replacement of the dance floor and new seating in the stalls.

Stourbridge Town Hall has a full proscenium arch stage and is thus well placed to deliver drama and musical theatre. During 2005, new collapsible tiered seating was installed which now enables the Hall to provide theatre productions which can compete on equal footing with other regional theatre venues. This venue is the subject of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore large parts of the original structure.

Equipped with modern computerised box office facilities, including full access to sales of tickets on the internet, large lighting and sound rigs, technical staff and dedicated promotional support, these two Halls devise and deliver a growing programme of professional entertainment, attracting national and international stars and musical ensembles. The Public Halls are hired by a large number of amateur groups with a long tradition of delivering musical and dramatic art in all five venues.

3.3 Himley Hall & Park

The Himley Estate comprises a Grade II* listed stately home, the former residence of the Earls of Dudley, surrounded by 180 acres of historic 'Capability Brown' landscaped parkland. Following a fascinating history as one of the most 'jet-set' and luxurious stately homes in England during the 1930's Himley endured a steady decline in its fortunes until it was purchased outright by Dudley Council in 1988. A major grant funded refurbishment programme began some years later in 1993 and the Hall opened to the public in 1995. During the last seven years Himley's potential as a multi-use venue has emerged.

As Dudley's premier outdoor events venue Himley hosts over 25 outdoor events each year ranging from outdoor theatre, performed by local theatre companies and health promoting activities such as fun runs, to Fun Days for target age groups such as the Under 5's and the largest local authority bonfire night celebration in the Country. Himley Park is now the venue for the Dudley Performing Arts Festival each year which is the 'performance finale' of the academic year for all of Dudley's schools. The 3 day festival includes music, drama and dance from schoolchildren across the Borough.

The parkland is also home to the Boroughs only mapped orienteering course and as such attracts numerous visits from Dudley schools. Himley Park also includes one of the best coarse fishing lakes in the Midlands and a public 9 hole golf course. Himley Park is also the resident venue for local sports clubs such as sailing and croquet.

Himley Hall is operated as a major conference and civil wedding venue and is open to the public during spring and summer for a variety of arts, crafts and general interest temporary exhibitions including the annual display of work from final year students at the International Glass Centre in Brierley Hill.

The blueprint of all of Himley Hall's regeneration and revival includes continued innovation and diversification, development and refurbishment, preserving the built heritage of the Borough whilst remaining focused on the Council's aim to deliver high quality cultural opportunities and services to the local residents and businesses at increasingly good value for money.

3.4 Sport and Recreation

There is a well established infrastructure for sport in the Borough. There are many sports clubs whose emergence dates back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Club cricket has been played in Halesowen since 1847 and in Stourbridge and Coseley since 1870.

A number of sports clubs, such as Halesowen Athletic and Cycling Club and Gornal Athletic Football Club, own and have developed their own facilities, while other sports clubs have long term lease agreements with both the Council and other landowners. These agreements have facilitated the development of sports grounds and other facilities in the Borough.

Each township is served by public playing pitches which have been developed over time to support the demand for local football. The growth of mini-soccer and youth football has resulted in Stourbridge Youth Football League being the largest youth organisation in the Borough with more than 48,000 registered participants.

Public swimming pools have been in existence in Dudley and Stourbridge since the early twentieth century. Stourbridge Swimming Club used such facilities for more than one hundred years and are recognised as one of the top clubs in the country. Further facility developments in the early 1960s resulted in swimming pools being built in Coseley, Brierley Hill and Halesowen. In the mid to late 1970s modern public leisure centres replaced the ageing pools in Stourbridge and Dudley, and there was a boom in sports hall provision in the mid to late 1970s, predominantly on school campuses. Additional sports hall facilities have been developed in the past twenty years and in the past ten years there has been marked growth in the provision of floodlit synthetic turf pitches.

There is no professional sports club in the Borough, but there is a track record of developing sports people who have excelled at the highest level. Dorothy Round, the Wimbledon ladies tennis champion, and England and Manchester United footballer, Duncan Edwards both hail from the Borough. Earls Gymnastics Club continues this trend producing athletes who perform at the highest level.

The growth of private sector health and fitness and indoor leisure provision over the past ten years has been a noticeable development.

Next Generation, Fitness First and TopNotch are among the national companies to have developed facilities in the Borough, further extending the composition of the mixed economy of sports and recreation facility provision.

3.5 Public Libraries and Archives

Dudley Library Service has a network of 18 branch libraries spread across the Borough. In addition there is a Housebound Library Service taking services to individuals who are unable to access the services provided in library buildings.

Libraries are key players in achieving the Council's targets for the e-enablement of services with the provision of free access to the internet via People's Network computers in all 18 libraries.

There are a range of services that customers of Dudley Libraries may take advantage of for example they could take out a book or, they may prefer a DVD, CD or video. Equally, they may want the use of our computers, get a photocopy, send a fax or even hire one of our rooms. We also offer a service to visitors to the area, giving information on local attractions as well as selling a range of publication and souvenirs related to Dudley and the Black Country.

There are over 600,000 books available for loan, ranging from popular fiction for adults and children to postgraduate study material. All holdings are listed in the library catalogue.

There are also Asian language books (Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Gujarati) available for loan at Dudley, Halesowen, Long Lane, Lye and Stourbridge, together with a collection of French, Spanish, German and Italian novels at Brierley Hill, Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge libraries.

There are over 30,000 audio items available from Dudley, Brierley Hill, Halesowen, Stourbridge, Gornal, Sedgley, Kingswinford and Wordsley libraries. These include cassettes, and CDs, ranging from pop music to the classics. There is also a wide range of talking books on cassette and CD which are loaned for 4 weeks and free of charge.

DVDs and Videos are also available from Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge libraries with over 3,000 titles in stock, the collections include feature films, instructional videos and videos for children, TV series, humour and classics (e.g. Shakespeare/Dickens).

All libraries are equipped with computers which have high-speed internet connections and Microsoft Office applications for the public use. Computers can be booked in advance either on-line or in person.

Jaws and Zoomtext are available at all libraries to help people with sight difficulties. Libraries have also got a range of alternative mice and keyboards for customers who find it hard or painful to use their arms, hands and wrists. Recently added to Stourbridge, Dudley, Halesowen and Brierley Hill libraries, you will find a workstation with an adjustable desk along with a large screen monitor and Text Read and Write Help software.

Classes teaching people how to use the computers are available in a number of libraries around the Borough and it is even possible to gain a nationally recognised qualification in ICT (CLAIT).

3.6 Geography and Green Space

Dudley is a landscape of hills and valleys in the western part of the West Midlands conurbation, approximately 9 miles to the west of Birmingham and 6 miles to the south of Wolverhampton. To the west lies the urban fringe of South Staffordshire and the rural parts of Worcestershire. Dudley Town itself straddles the national watershed, formed here by the limestone and dolerite ridge stretching from Sedgley Beacon through to Castle Hill and up across Kates Hill to the 'Rowley Ragstone' of the Rowley Hills.

Rather than being dominated by one major centre, Dudley is composed of a number of small townships, each having its own identity and culture springing from more ancient rural villages and mining centres of the past. The main town centres are: Dudley, Stourbridge in the south west, Halesowen to the south and east, and Brierley Hill in the middle of the Borough. Adjacent to Brierley Hill is the Merry Hill Centre – one of the largest out-of-centre retail developments in Europe.

Despite its predominantly urban character, an estimated 25% of the Borough is open space, including just under 1700 hectares of Green Belt, which contribute to its environmental quality and attractiveness. These open spaces themselves are often a result of previous cultural activities that still shape the landscape and the communities today. Many of these have been reclaimed by Nature or sensitively restored and are now of very high importance for the conservation of biodiversity as well as geology.

For example:

- the abandoned limestone mines of Wrens Nest and Castle Hill are at least of national importance as hibernation sites for bats, whilst the limestone also supports locally rare plants such as Small Scabious, Milkwort and Fairy Flax;

- land at Fens Pools, once dug for clay and coal, is one of the country's top ten sites for Great Crested Newt, for which it was recently ratified by the European Union as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), the only SAC wholly within the West Midlands Metropolitan County. The wetlands are also important for breeding and migratory waterfowl;

Saltwells, also worked for clay and coal, was the first LNR to be declared in the West Midlands Metropolitan County and the UK's first reserve under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere project. Now covering some 100ha, it is one of the largest urban nature reserves in the country and contains the largest woodland in the Borough, one of the best Bluebell woods in the country. Furthermore, seven of the Borough's eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and six of our seven Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are within post - industrial environments.

In Dudley, we are well on the way towards achieving the Government's Public Service Agreement targets for both designations, with 100% of SSSIs in favourable/ recovering status and 0.9 hectares of LNR/1,000 head of population.

The local importance for urban nature conservation was highlighted in 1981, when *"The Endless Village"* by Bunny Teagle was published by the Nature Conservancy Council. This book, the first to recognise and celebrate the natural environment of an urban area, describes the wildlife and green-spaces of the Black Country and Birmingham. 25 years on *The Endless Village Revisited* is documenting the changes that have occurred to key wildlife areas. Indeed, the wildlife value of urban sites is frequently greater than open countryside, where biodiversity has often been depleted through agricultural intensification.

In spite of its protracted industrial history, and contrary to popular belief, much of the Borough remains green, with several extensive areas of open land penetrating deep into the urban environment. These wedges of countryside provide invaluable 'green lungs' and total some 2,860 ha, almost 30% of the Borough's surface area, but vary greatly in character, including:

- urban fringe farmland south of Halesowen and Stourbridge;
- the valleys of the River Stour and its tributaries;
- the limestone hills north of Dudley and the Coombeswood wedge east of Halesowen, standing on the Northfield-Sedgley Ridge;
- the Borough's largest expanse of open water at Fens Pools and Buckpool; and
- other land in a variety of uses along the western boundary.

This countryside network provides an important resource for wildlife, with six strategic wildlife corridors recognised across the Borough in the Black Country Nature Conservation Strategy. Furthermore, virtually the whole Borough lies within 'The Black Country to Lickey Hills' Biodiversity Enhancement Area (BEA), one of 14 BEAs identified within the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy as containing important concentrations of biodiversity.

Collectively, the trees and woods across the Borough form part of the Black Country Urban Forest, which received a boost around the turn of the Millennium when the National Lottery funded the creation of over 1000 new woodlands across the Black Country – a valuable 'carbon sink' to help tackle the threats posed by global warming.

Such a rich legacy inevitably brings people and nature conservation close together. It has long been recognised that a high quality environment contributes directly towards economic investment and sustainability, and towards people's quality of life and mental stimulation, whilst a clean and accessible green space with opportunities to contribute towards its maintenance benefit people's physical health. In turn, greater awareness and understanding of the environment help to safeguard its future and to conserve vulnerable habitats and species.

The greenness of the Borough also includes a multitude of open spaces, recreation grounds, allotments and parks creating a network of public open spaces within the urban environment – a Landscape Web. There is a wealth of formal parks which provide attractive settings for both formal and informal recreation; children's play, organised sports such as football, croquet and bowls, facilities for health walks, tennis, pitch-and-put. For those who wish to engage in more informal recreational pursuits there is ample opportunity for walking the dog, family picnics, enjoying the displays of flowers, shrubs and trees or even listening to the summer programme of band concerts.

Due to the benevolence of local millionaire holloware manufacturer in the late 1920's, Mr Ernest Stevens, the Borough is today the proud guardian of Stevens Parks in Stourbridge, Wollescote and Quarry Bank. Whilst there are George VI and V parks at Kingswinford and Wordsley respectively. In addition there are town parks and local parks serving local communities throughout the 30 square miles of the Borough. In common with public parks across the country there has been a decline in the facilities and condition of our formal parks over the last two decades. However, thanks to funding from both the Lottery and Central Government the Local Authority has been able to lead a renaissance in the fortunes of our parks with support from a growing number of Friends Groups, made up of local people who are championing their individual park or open space.

Currently there are two parks which are listed on the English Heritage “Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest in England”, the Leasowes, in Halesowen and Priory Park, in Dudley. The Leasowes is a Grade I listed park designed in the 1700’s by the poet William Shenstone. The park was the first example of the *ferme ornee*, or ornamental farm, style of garden and initiated the beginning of the English School of garden design. Most of the original follies ruins and root houses have long since disappeared but the fundamental landscape structure of woodland valleys with streams and lakes still exist. Thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the first phase of restoration is now underway.

Priory Park in Dudley takes its name from the old Priory of St James's, the ruins of which are a prominent feature in the grounds of the park. The Priory, today a scheduled Ancient Monument, is not far from Dudley Castle and was first founded by Gervase Paganel, Lord of Dudley, in the 12th Century and was closed by Henry VIII in the 1530's. The ruins of The Priory were restored to their current form and the grounds laid out as a park, during the 1930's.

Following on from the successful pilot project “Steps to Health”, the Council continues to work in partnership with the Primary Care Trust to provide more opportunities for physical activity in order to improve participants general health. The original 5 parks: Buffery, Grange, Netherton, Priory and Stevens Park Wollescote, are still the focus of summer activity programmes but in addition, guided health walks and other activities are being organised in many park locations around the Borough.

The walled garden at Wollescote Park is home to National Plant Collections for *Ceanothus* and *Rudbeckia*. Nationwide there are 650 plant collections at over 450 venues affiliated to The National Plant Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens. Our *Ceanothus* collection contains over 80 varieties and is one of only three collections in the country.

The Borough has 33 allotment sites with over 1000 individual plots. Historically allotments were a place where people grew their own food and they became very popular in Wartime Britain. Today all our sites are running at full capacity and are managed by 27 individual Allotments Associations.

Traditionally, Black Country residents have always kept horses and as a result the Council manages 108 acres of grazing land, providing 49 sites which are leased to horse graziers.

In addition to the parks there are a number of recreation areas around the Borough which provide facilities for local league football matches and training. In total there are 59 full size pitches and 26 mini soccer pitches used by 8 local football leagues including one female league.

3.7 Population

Dudley has a recorded population of 305,600 (according to 2005 mid year estimates), the highest of the four Black Country Local Authorities. Within the West Midlands, the population of Dudley is third only to Birmingham and Coventry. In terms of population density within the West Midlands after Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Sandwell, Dudley is the fourth most populated according to the Census 2001.

Dudley has an ageing population with people over 60 accounting for 22.2% of the total population, compared to 20.6% in 1991. The over 80s account for 4%, increasing from 3.2% in 1991. Children and young people aged 0-19 accounted for 24.7% of the total population in 1991. In 2001 this dropped slightly to 24.5%, and those aged between 20-29 year olds had dropped from 15.2% to 11.2% respectively according to the Census 2001.

The ethnicity of the Dudley Borough population has changed little between the latest census counts. In 1991, White British residents made up 95.51% of the total population; in 2001, this figure was 93.68%. Of the other ethnic groups, Pakistani is the largest, making up a little over 2% of the overall population. The next highest group is Indian, which constitutes just over 1.5% of the total.

3.8 Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD) is a measure of deprivation at a small area level across England. The Index measures deprivation through seven domains; income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime and living environment. The seven domains can be measured separately or combined together to give an overall measure of deprivation.

Super Output Areas (SOAs) are a set of boundaries created for the collection and publication of statistics. Produced by the Office for National Statistics, they are designed to have similar population sizes and similar dwelling types so that the characteristics of one could be compared fairly to those of another. There are 32,482 SOAs in England, and 202 in Dudley Borough. SOAs are purely for statistical use and do not represent neighbourhoods or communities.

The areas most affected by deprivation are situated in the wards of Castle and Priory and St Thomas's, both of which are in close proximity to Dudley Town Centre. In each of the wards, three of the SOAs are in the 10% most deprived in England according to the overall measure of deprivation. A corridor of deprivation then extends towards Brierley Hill town centre and its surrounding localities. This corridor includes the Eve Hill, Blowers Green and Woodside areas, and extends out towards Netherton and Hawbush.

The SOA situated in the ward of Norton is the least deprived in the Borough. Other areas showing few SOAs in the 20% most deprived are in the west, and south of the Borough, around Sedgley, Kingswinford, Stourbridge, Amblecote, Pedmore, Wollaston, and Hayley Green.

Respecting the health and disability domain, one SOA located in the wards of Castle and Priory and St James's respectively fall within the 10% most deprived in England. Clustering of health deprivation exists in Netherton and Woodside, St James's and St Thomas's ward. The least health deprived areas tend to be found on the western edge and towards the south of the Borough illustrating significant health inequalities within Dudley.

The key deprived areas across all wards have been prioritised in the Borough and are known as "managed neighbourhoods."

3.9 Local Economy

As with many areas the local economic base has undergone dramatic restructuring during the past thirty years. Traditionally, the Dudley economy has been heavily dependent on manufacturing. In 1981, 43.3% of people working in Dudley were employed in this sector (Annual Employment Survey). In 2004, this percentage had fallen to 16.8%, according to the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), which is still higher than the figure for Great Britain of 11.9%.

In contrast the service sector now makes up a greater proportion of jobs in Dudley, having increased from 48.9% of the workforce in 1981 (Annual Employment Survey) to 78% in 2004 (ABI). Pre-eminent within the service sector are distribution (including retail), hotels and restaurants employing 27.4%, public administration, education and health employing 24% and banking, finance and insurance employing 16%. In addition, the construction sector has continued to increase over the past five years and now accounts for 6.8% of the workforce, ahead of the England average of 4.4% and represents a significant employment opportunity for local people.

The Visitor Economy, comprising hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries, is a key focus for the Black Country Study in developing a framework for the long term renaissance of the sub region. In Dudley, approximately 5,794 jobs are supported directly and indirectly in tourism. In 2003, Dudley welcomed 4.8 million visitors to the Borough, spending a total of £189 million.

The ABI employee analysis identified 119,434 jobs in Dudley in 2004 compared to 122,317 jobs in 2003 representing a 2.4% decrease. The most significant job losses were in manufacturing and banking, finance and insurance sectors.

However, it is anticipated that major physical development opportunities in Brierley Hill, Castle Gate, Castle Hill, Yorks Park and King Street/Flood Street will create significant employment opportunities and further expansion of the local economy. It is anticipated that major physical development opportunities in Brierley Hill, Castle Hill, Yorks Park and King Street/Flood Street will create significant employment opportunities and further expansion of the local economy.

The results of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2005 show that Dudley has the second lowest average full time gross weekly earnings of £369.20 within the West Midlands, based on workplace statistics.

Dudley's low wage economy is further underlined by the decrease in the number of full time employees, from 70.3% in 2000 to 67.1% in 2004, and an increase in the number of part time employees, from 29.7% in 2000 to 32.9% in 2004, when comparing the ABI over the five year period from 2000-2004.

A comparison of claimant unemployment rates in the West Midlands County, in July 2006, reveals that Dudley Borough has the lowest unemployment rate in the Black Country and the third lowest rate in the Metropolitan area at 3.8%. However, high concentrations of unemployment remain with one ward having an unemployment rate over twice the average of the borough.

4.0 Strategic Context

National

Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)

The DCMS's aim is to improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, to support the pursuit of excellence and to champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries.

To achieve this, they have developed four strategic priorities:

- **Children and Young People** – enhancing access to a fuller cultural and sporting life for children and young people and giving them the opportunity to develop their talents to the full.
- **Community** – opening up our institutions to the wider community to promote lifelong learning and social cohesion.
- **Economy** – maximising the contribution which the tourism, creative and leisure industries can make to the UK's economy.
- **Delivery** – modernising the way we deliver our services by ensuring our sponsored bodies are set and meet targets which put consumers first.

The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future (DCMS 2001)

DCMS responsibilities also cover the identification, conservation and enhancement of the historic built environment in England.

In December 2001, together with the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, DCMS published *The Historic Environment: A Force For Our Future*. This, the first statement of Government policy on the historic environment for a generation, concluded a wide ranging policy review. It sets out an ambitious vision which aims to unlock the full potential of our historic assets.

People and Places: Social Inclusion Policy for the Built and Historic Environment (DCMS 2002)

This document sets out why the built environment, both contemporary and historical, is important when considering issues of social inclusion. A high quality, well-managed built environment improves the relationship between citizens and their environment and contributes significantly to social and economic regeneration.

The key policy objective of this document is to make social inclusion a priority for all these organisations and agencies, and to achieve the widest possible access to the contemporary and historic built environment as part of the cultural heritage.

Framework for the Future

In 2003 the DCMS produced the document *'Framework for the Future; Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade'*, This document outlined their vision for the future transformation of library services and the developments needed to ensure it is achieved. Their key priorities are:

- Books, Reading and Learning
- Digital Citizenship
- Community and Civic Values
- Building Capacity to deliver transformation

Library Services will be judged by their capacity to deliver these priorities.

Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future

The report of the Archives Task Force was published in 2004. It outlines the importance of archives which *"contain unique resources covering every aspect of the UK's history (along with links to other nations and cultures), its interests, its business life and its creativity. Collectively these resources were something that is of interest to everyone"*.

It also says *“it is not overstating the importance of archives to suggest that without their existence there would be no real source of history, whether of the last ten years or the last thousand years”*. It refers to the importance of archives record keeping thus supporting decision-makings and governance processes.

Natural England : Strategic Direction 2006-2009

“Natural England is here to conserve and enhance the natural environment for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings.”

Launched on 2nd October 2006, Natural England brought together English Nature and parts of the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service.

Natural England is working towards the delivery of four strategic outcomes, which together deliver on its purpose to conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations:

- A healthy natural environment: England’s natural environment will be conserved and enhanced;
- Enjoyment of the natural environment: more people enjoying, understanding and acting to improve, the natural environment, more often;
- Sustainable use of the natural environment: the use and management of the natural environment is more sustainable;
- A secure environmental future: decisions which collectively secure the future of the natural environment.

Four themes around which new campaigns are to be developed are:

- **Climate Change**

Climate change is the most serious threat to our natural environment. In England our wildlife is already being noticeably affected by it. Urgent steps need to be taken to reduce levels of harmful greenhouse gases.

- **Health**

Growing medical evidence shows that access to the natural environment improves health and wellbeing, prevents disease and helps people recover from illness. Experiencing nature in the outdoors can help tackle childhood obesity, coronary heart disease, stress and mental health problems.

- **Sustainable Land Management**

England's unique and valued natural environment is a product of many thousands of years of human activity. With a few important exceptions, the right management is critical to maintain its diversity and value.

- **Marine**

England has some of the finest marine wildlife in Europe, with dramatic underwater habitats and landscapes, and over 10,000 types of plant and animal.

English Heritage

Local Strategic Partnerships and the Historic Environment (EH 2005)

The historic environment can have a positive influence on a wide range of local activities including regeneration, housing, education, economic development and community engagement. It can also contribute towards the achievement of the shared priorities agreed between central and local government because:

- People are immensely proud of their local history. Surviving heritage, even if hidden below ground, is synonymous with local identity. Heritage is a fundamental element that contributes towards local character and distinctiveness
- The historic environment has an important place in local cultural activities
- The historic environment is a local educational resource for people of all ages
- The historic environment contributes to everybody's quality of life and can help to foster civic responsibility and citizenship
- Reusing the historic environment, particularly historic buildings, lies at the heart of creating sustainable communities and adds value to regeneration projects.

Neighbourhood Renewal (PAT 10)

Key recommendations to local authorities in the context of Sport and Arts role in neighbourhood renewal:-

- Wider regeneration strategies and other strategies adopted by local authorities to improve an area's performance in the four 'key indicators' of more jobs, less crime, better health and improved educational attainment should explicitly consider the role which their cultural, leisure and tourism capacity can play.

- Local authorities should map/assess culture and leisure provision and expenditure geographically (e.g. ward by ward) and according to the social, ethnic and professional background of users. There is a clear need for better information and analysis of expenditure and outcomes in this area.
- Local authorities should seek to improve value for money from their assets/facilities as a whole by ensuring the widest feasible use of them (e.g. school arts and sports facilities out of school hours).

Game Plan

Government's two overarching objectives for sport and physical activity:-

- A major increase in participation in sport and physical activity, (all children should have a minimum of 2 hours high quality PE and school sport both within and beyond the curriculum by 2006 and 2 hours within the curriculum and 2/3 hours beyond the curriculum by 2010), primarily because of the significant health benefits and to reduce the growing costs of inactivity: and
- A sustainable improvement in success in international competition, particularly in the sports which matter most to the public, primarily because of the "feel good factor" associated with winning.

Of principal importance to local authorities are the following recommendations:-

- **Grassroots participation:** a wide range of initiatives are needed, with a focus on economically disadvantaged groups, in particular young people (the focus of much current policy), women and older people. These need to tackle all the barriers to participation (such as lack of time, cost, information or motivation), as well as failures in provision (poor coaches or facilities).
- **Delivery:** organisational reform and determining exactly what works is needed before the Government considers further increases to its investment in sport. Less money should go to bureaucrats and more to the end user. Public, private and voluntary sectors need to work together better towards a common goal.

Chief Medical Officer – 'At Least Five a Week'

- Leisure services to find ways of attracting and retaining participants of different ages and from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and should encourage and enable people to try new activities.

- Leisure and sports bodies to set role models and encourage children to be active for life, not just during childhood.
- Identify pathways for young people (whilst in school and on leaving school) to continue their interest in physical/sporting activity through involvement in club membership. This will engage them in healthy lifestyles for life.
- Local transport plans to give particular consideration to walking and cycling as means of commuting and personal travel.
- Local authorities to take steps to make neighbourhoods and communities more 'activity-friendly' – pleasant and safe for walking, cycling and playing.
- Town planners, architects and engineers to ensure that physical activity is facilitated, and not discouraged, in new buildings, streets, housing developments and schools.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – “Life Support”

An advocacy document which demonstrates how the natural environment, its protection and biodiversity contribute to:-

- Community Action
- Health and Well-being
- Wealth and Jobs
- Lifelong Learning

Arts Council England – Local Government and the Arts: a Vision for Partnership (2002)

Arts Council England’s national priorities for 2006-2008 are:-

- Taking part in the arts
- Children and young people
- Our creative economy
- Vibrant communities
- Internationalism

Specific priorities for work with local government:-

- **The Creative Economy:** developing local facilities and services, workspaces, business support for creative people and small business; advocacy for the economic role of the arts with Councils and other regional partners.

- **Healthy Communities:** to embed the arts in health policy and planning; to integrate arts and health into LSP's and Local Authorities (LA's); to improve training opportunities and support for artists and arts organisations working in the health sector.
- **Vital Neighbourhoods:** contribution of experienced artists to community regeneration projects throughout the process; strengthen role of local arts organisations within local government modernisation; work with other agencies involved in community and neighbourhood renewal.
- **Engaging Young People:** extent of opportunities for arts contribution to curriculum and school life; position arts at centre of youth services; develop arts role in early years service.

MLA – Investing in Knowledge

- **Education, Learning and Skills** – learning at the centre, partnership and high quality experiences, staff development leading service improvement.
- **Communities and Creativity** – tackling social issues, local services for local people.
- **The Knowledge Economy** – supporting businesses, on-line cultural tourism support.
- **Networking Knowledge** – knowledge web, links with broadcast media, communities of interest.

A quiet revolution; links to shared priorities of health, safety, educational attainment, quality of life of children, young people, families at risk and older people, and economic vitality. Managed regionally by MLA (West Midlands).

Choosing Health – White Paper (2004)

- To increase the take up of sport and physical activity opportunity for children
- By 2010 to halt the year on year increase in obesity among children under 11
- Healthy/extended schools
- Support for cycling – national standard for cycle training
- PE and school sport – national strategy for PE, school sport and club links
- Local area agreements between LA's, PCT's and Children's Trusts
- Promoting improved health in the workplace
- Physical activity promotion fund
- Strengthening the regime governing the sale of school playing fields/use of proceeds to fund outdoor sports facilities.

“Our Health, Our Care, Our Say”/Dudley Borough Older Peoples Strategy

The White Paper “Our health, Our Care, Our Say” sets a new direction for the whole health and social care system. It confirms the vision set out in the Department of Health Green Paper “Independence, Well-being and Choice.” The White Paper is about personal and responsive health and social care services that reflect people’s needs and wishes, prevention, public health and wellbeing, tackling inequalities, more focused support for people with long term conditions, and more services provided outside of hospitals, closer to people.

The White Paper along with the Dudley Borough Older Peoples Strategy sets a vision which seeks to achieve significant improvement in the quality of life for older people in society.

Specifically these documents point to a ‘better quality of life, enhanced lifestyles with better access to leisure, social activities and lifelong learning opportunities’ for older people as one of the key dimensions supporting independence and wellbeing in older age.

In terms of both ‘health and healthy living’ in older age and also providing ‘social activity social networks, keeping busy and lifelong learning’ for older people, access to a range of cultural services, facilities and activities can contribute significantly to the achievement of this vision.

The PE, School Sport and Club Links National Strategy (PESSCL)

This strategy was launched in October 2002. It is a joint DCMS and DfES initiative and aims to improve the take up of sporting opportunities by 5 – 16 year olds. The strategy has three main targets:

- To set up a national structure for PE and school sport by creating:
 - 400 specialist sports colleges by 2005;
 - 400 school sport co-ordinator partnerships by 2006; and
 - 3,200 school sport co-ordinators in secondary schools and 18,000 in primary schools by 2006.
- Improve the quality of teaching, coaching and learning in PE and school sport
- To increase the percentage of children going into clubs from school sport partnerships which is currently 20%.

Youth Matters

The Green paper builds on the ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes with the intention to re-shape services for young people. The proposals aim to address four key challenges:

- Engagement and empower more young people in positive activities
- Encourage more young people to become involved in their communities
- Provision of better information, advice and guidance to young people to enable them to make informed choices
- Provision of better and more personalised support for each young person.

Throughout the Green Paper, there are strong references to the opportunities and contributions that sport can make to these challenges and the outcomes.

Regional

West Midlands Regional Concordat

The West Midlands Regional Concordat is published and promoted jointly by partner organisations signed up to this agreement; the partners include Advantage West Midlands(AWM), Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM), West Midlands Local Government Association (WMLGA), and the West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA). The Concordat emphasises a common aim to secure the protection and improvement of the quality of life of the population of the West Midlands Region and identifies a number of key regional priorities towards which the partners will work.

The Cultural Strategy supports the concordat's commitments in the following policy areas; planning, transport, housing, social inclusion, environment, health, culture, economy and business, learning and skills.

West Midlands Regional Cultural Strategy

Culture West Midlands is one of eight Regional Cultural Consortiums in England set up by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to promote a joined up approach to culture and the creative industries. Culture West Midlands includes representatives of all of the specialist agencies with region-wide responsibilities for the arts, sport, museums, heritage, libraries, archives, creative industries and tourism.

This first Regional Cultural Strategy was launched in 2001 and the principles of that Strategy are still sound and relevant until 2006. It provides a focus for the regional cultural agencies to work together towards a shared vision and priorities and a basis for them to engage with cultural organisations and Local Authorities throughout the region. "Valuing People and Places" sets out priorities for action for the West Midlands Cultural sector over the next two years. It reflects changes in regional policy and priorities since the strategy was launched.

It has been developed by Culture West Midlands and the Regional Cultural Forum, which brings together a wide range of regional agencies who share a commitment to developing the cultural life of the West Midlands.

It is a framework designed to encourage cultural organisations across the region to share what they are doing now and what is planned for the future to support the principles of the Regional Strategy.

West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy

The Strategy seeks to achieve a vision for 2010 and beyond: “The West Midlands visitor economy will be recognised for its continuing growth, and for the excellence of a number of sophisticated, world class urban and authentic rural destinations for business and leisure visitors, which showcase the region’s creativity and its heritage, celebrate its diversity, and set new standards for quality and sustainability”.

To achieve this vision the Strategy sets out three strategic aims to;

- Add value to the West Midlands visitor economy;
- Enhance the West Midlands for residents and visitors, and
- Support local business and cultural life.

The Strategy is a framework for partnership working and recognises Local Authorities in the region as key delivery partners in addition to Destination Management Partnerships working at a Sub-regional level.

Sub Regional

Black Country Study

The Black Country Consortium (BCC) was established in 1999 as a public private voluntary sector partnership with the goal of exploring sub regional ways of working where added value to work and commitment at district level could be achieved.

The strategic partners of BCC include the four Black Country local authorities, AWM, Black Country LSC, Black Country Chamber and Business Link, Black Country Connexions, Black Country Consortium of Colleges, and the University of Wolverhampton. In liaison with its regional partners, the Black Country Consortium is coordinating the Black Country Study which will test and articulate the Consortium’s aspirations as set out in its 2033 Vision ‘Looking Forward: The Black Country in 2033’. The Black Country Study aims to set radical new aspirations for the Black Country over the next 30 years and to draft a Spatial Framework to guide the future development of the Black Country to achieve that 30 Year Vision.

The Black Country Study is important to the future development of Dudley Borough since it will inform the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The RSS is an important document as it is part of the Borough's Development Plan upon which planning and regeneration decisions are focused. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Borough's spatial development in culture and leisure terms. Dudley Town Centre is recognised as a regional focus for leisure and tourism based around the existing and improved attractions in the vicinity of Dudley Town Centre. This also recognises the important historical and heritage feature of the town centre and its environs.

From the context of Culture, the purpose of the study is to; firstly, develop the concept of 'Black Country as Urban Park', a distinctive quality Black Country wide asset, providing a network of diverse environmental and urban lifestyle experiences. Secondly, to identify the spatial implications and set out standards for achieving the aspirations set out in the Black Country Vision for cultural diversity, quality urban living, sustainable living, schools investment and centre of lifelong learning, health facilities and young people. The Black Country Study will develop sub regional policies that will contribute to an early partial review of the Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) in Spring 2006.

Black Country Visitor Economy Strategy

The 'Visitor Economy' is defined as encompassing tourism, leisure, creative industries, culture, sport, the arts, heritage, food and drink, and retail/shopping. 'A pleasant place to live is a pleasant place to visit' is the central idea for the Black Country Visitor Economy Strategy for if local improvements are made which improve residents' quality of life they will automatically improve the visitor experience. A happy visitor is one who will return, recommend, move or even invest!

The Strategy identifies three strands of action for enabling the Visitor Economy to develop and become a driving force for regeneration and economic vitality – 'Making the Connections', 'Establishing the Destinations' and 'Beautification'.

The Visitor Economy includes festivals, business tourism, sport, art and culture as well as town centre management, planning regeneration and inward investment and, given its breadth, is dependent on, and is the responsibility of, a wide range of partners. Each Black Country Authority has an action plan, the Dudley Action Plan assisting in the implementation of the Black Country Visitor Economy Strategy and addressing local issues through the Council Plan and Dudley Community Partnership.

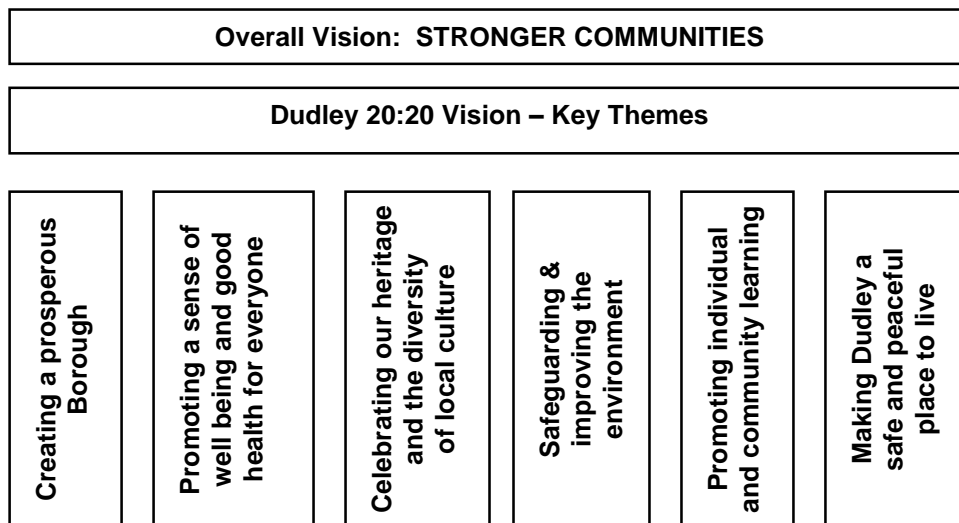
Local

Dudley Community Strategy

The Dudley Borough Challenge highlights the strategic vision of “stronger communities” and the six key themes of the Dudley Community Strategy which underpin the vision. A series of challenges will be addressed to achieve the overall vision and these include:

- Addressing disadvantage
- Acting now – Looking ahead
- Key priorities and
- A vision for all.

Challenges underpinned by the strategic aims of the Cultural Strategy.



Through the Dudley Borough Challenge consultation process the value attached to the heritage and cultural life of the Borough, including its many recreational activities and its contribution to the quality of life, was highlighted.

The three strategic aims of this Cultural Strategy support the deployment of the Vision of the Dudley Borough Challenge to build upon the real sense of pride, respect and belonging that stems from living in the Borough, by celebrating the physical heritage and varied cultural life of its people and enjoying its many leisure opportunities.

Dudley Council Action Plan

The Council Action Plan supports the Dudley Community Partnership's vision of 'stronger communities' and also focuses on the key issues of concern to residents and users of Council services. To achieve this the Council Action Plan has the following six themes of:

- Caring matters
- Environment matters
- Learning matters,
- Regeneration matters
- Safety matters, and
- Quality Services matter,

These themes are supported by Council Action Plan key priorities.

In particular, the Cultural Strategy supports the following key priorities of:

- Improving Parks for People under Environment matters,
- Provision of Diversionary Activities to Young People under Safety matters,
- An Active Borough under Caring matters, and
- Strategic Review of Leisure Centres under Quality Services matter.

Every Child Matters

The Government has described the Children's Bill 2004 as setting out "the most far-reaching reform of Children's Services for 30 years". Following on from the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', the stated aim of the Bill is to transform Children's Services to maximise opportunity and minimise risk for every child and young person. Viewed as a long term (10 year) plan the Bill is based upon three pillars:

- safeguarding children
- enhancing children's achievement and
- improving children's well-being.

The Children's Bill aims to promote partnership working and sharpen accountability.

A Director of Children's Services has been appointed to have lead responsibility for improving children's lives at a local level and ensuring that all statutory agencies who come into contact with children work together to protect children. The Cultural Strategy's Strategic Aim 1 'To increase Access and Participation' has a specific focus on children and young people.

Dudley Health Inequalities Strategic Plan

The Dudley Health Inequalities Strategic Plan (Closing the Gap: Tackling Health Inequalities in Dudley) recognises significant health inequalities across the Borough, and the need to link strategic documents with greater coordination of Borough strategies. It also recognises the need for clear lines of accountability across Dudley Community Partnership themes.

A core principle of the Dudley Health Inequalities Strategic Plan is to have a shared vision in order to maximise impact. The Cultural Strategy supports this principle, the deployment of the strategic aims clearly making a positive contribution to addressing the health inequalities within the Borough.

Tackling Obesity: A Framework for Action in Dudley

The Framework has been developed to respond to the national obesity epidemic at a local level. It is also a response to key national and local policy documents, where addressing overweight and obesity is a recognised beneficial outcome both directly and indirectly. The Framework is designed to highlight recommendations and local activity (Dudley Charter for Action) relating to and addressing the main causal factors of obesity.

The Framework has been led by Dudley's Public Health Department and developed through the work of a multi-agency working group and is in response to a request to produce a Framework by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership and the government's Public Sector Agreement (PSA) target "to halt the year-on-year rise in obesity among children under 11 by 2010 in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole". The Framework is supported by the Food for Health Steering Team and the Physical Activity Task Group.

Dudley Action Plan of the Black Country Visitor Economy Strategy

The actions identified within the Dudley Action Plan emerge from the Black Country Action Plan which underpins the Black Country Visitor Economy Strategy. The Dudley Action Plan identifies champions, lead partners and other partners responsible for delivering activities. The Cultural Strategy, along with Directorate Service Plans and Council strategies and programmes support the deployment of these actions as identified within the Dudley Action Plan.

5.0 Key Issues

The assessment of cultural provision and the operation of the cultural sector in Dudley Borough has identified a range of key issues that need to be addressed within this Strategy.

The principal challenges facing the sector are as follows:

- Fragmentation of the cultural sector
- Strategic development and planning of the cultural infrastructure
- Unequal access to cultural entitlement
- Cultures contribution to the wider agenda

Key Issues for the Strategy are:

- Limited evidence base of impact and outcomes arising from cultural services
- Resources

5.1 Sectoral Fragmentation

The cultural sector in Dudley Borough covers a wide range of activities and service providers. From sport to nature conservation from performing and visual arts to reading and heritage the cultural sector has a common sense of purpose but is without a sense of common identity or partnership. All of these disciplines enhance the quality of life for those individuals who access such activities and experiences. Yet the sector operates as small, independent units each competing against one another for a share of the Borough population's interest and involvement without an overarching, co-ordinated framework.

Similarly the public, private and voluntary sectors undertake yet further competition within and between cultural activity areas for 'market share'. If the cultural sector is going to maximise its potential within the Borough it is essential that a strong, coherent voice for culture emerges through a Borough Cultural Partnership in order to share knowledge and expertise, avoid duplication and maximise the profile of the sector.

5.2 Cultural Infrastructure

The Borough has a rich and diverse infrastructure of cultural facilities. A majority of these have been inherited as a legacy from past administrations and organisations whilst a number of newer modern facilities have also been developed in recent times.

The public sector provides the majority of the cultural facilities within the Borough inclusive of libraries, parks, leisure centres, museums, public halls, playing fields and archives. The majority of these facilities require modernisation of one type or another – from providing access to meet the legislative requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act through to the development of buildings of iconic status and quality to meet the expectations of today's customers.

Alongside these buildings, schools have developed facilities to provide for community access for sports and arts activities, the private sector has grown considerably in the field of health and fitness provision and the voluntary sector provides a range of community facilities across cultural disciplines.

Given the financial constraints that apply, particularly in the public sector, there is an increasing need to identify the range of modern facilities required to meet the needs and aspirations of Borough residents and the sector that is sustainable in the long term.

Additionally, to ensure the Borough has the right level of open space, sport and recreation facilities it is important to have undertaken the needs and opportunity assessments as required by Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG) and the Regional Spatial Strategy. Work is currently underway along these lines to develop the Council's Green Space Strategy. This will form an important basis for making decisions on where/on what to invest and where new facilities are required to meet community needs, Local Development Framework policies, master planning and planning application decisions, etc. This will also help justify bids for resources for new sport and recreation facilities from Governing bodies, etc.

This requires considerable thought given to the prioritisation of services and subsequent investment that would follow to ensure the cultural infrastructure of the Borough is sustainable.

5.3 Cultural Entitlement

The ambition, for the public sector in particular, is that as many residents and visitors in the Borough are able to access cultural opportunities as is possible. This aspiration is central to the ethos of public subsidy of cultural activities in order that such activities are made affordable and accessible to all sections of society.

This is not just in the context of maximising participation and engendering cultural entitlement, which are important in their own right, but also in terms of the wider benefits that such participation imbues, from improving the health and wellbeing of people through taking regular physical exercise, to improving learning, achievement and employment and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour through participation in positive, diversionary activities.

Evidence from sources such as the General Household Survey suggest that participation in cultural activities correlates directly according to social class and that the more affluent people within an area are more likely to take part in sports, arts and leisure pursuits. This also reflects statistics in relation to the health status of individuals, educational attainment and deprivation indices of neighbourhoods.

Providing access for all is the key priority for public sector cultural agencies and overcoming the barriers that exist, whether they be physical, environmental financial or attitudinal, is a key policy priority for such agencies.

5.4 Cultures Wider Contribution

It has often been said that Culture has been a 'Cinderella' Service which whilst having some importance attached to its provision is always one of the easier areas to target for budget reductions, partly due to the discretionary nature of most of its provision.

This problem has been partly created within the cultural sector due to poor advocacy of the wider benefits that accrue from the provision of high quality cultural activities and facilities. The sector has, in the past, justified the importance of cultural services in terms of the benefits of the activities being an end in themselves as opposed to the wider benefits to society, and this has been due, in part, to a lack of a robust evidential base demonstrating those wider benefits.

There is now a growing recognition across the public sector of the role that cultural services can play in terms of both social and economic regeneration. From improving the health status of individuals through regular exercise to reducing vandalism and anti-social behaviour through the provision of targeted, diversionary activities the sector has begun to demonstrate its value to the broader public policy agenda.

From the outcomes framework of 'Every Child Matters' to the Adult Services Green Paper, the benefits of sport, arts, recreation and leisure activities are being acknowledged as significantly contributing to wider policy goals and a key challenge for the cultural sector is to take advantage of this opportunity to demonstrate the 'added value' of cultural services.

5.5 Evidencing Impact and Outcomes

Unlike a number of other public sector functions, such as Education and Health, the performance management framework of the cultural services sector has been lacking in robust measures of impact and outcomes.

Performance indicators have been very limited and restricted to a small proportion of the sector; the collection and use of data has been poor and information on users and non-users and their views is not comprehensive and has not been used to inform service delivery, with too much emphasis placed on anecdotal evidence.

Within the public sector there is an increasing move towards involving local people in the design and delivery of services appropriate to their needs, no more so than within Cultural Services given that choice and competition are particularly evident in this sector.

Along with many other public service sectors there will be a move away from monitoring the outputs (i.e. numbers of service users) to the measurement of outcomes/impact that the service is making (i.e. improving health status; reducing anti-social behaviour; providing/creating employment opportunities) and the Strategy will need to identify mechanisms to capture this information.

5.6 Resources

Funding of the cultural sector within the Borough has traditionally been one of the lowest spend per head when compared with similar Councils. Similarly external funding for Culture has been low, again in comparison with like authorities, and one of the principal sources of such funding, the National Lottery, has had changes in its focus which will inevitably result in fewer opportunities for the funding of local cultural projects. Co-ordination of external funding across the Council and with its partners has been somewhat limited, leading to applications competing against one another for the limited resources available and there has been a lack of appropriate support for voluntary organisations in the development of relevant applications and in relation to the delivery and implementation of projects. The need to maximise resources available for Cultural Services is clearly evident and a major challenge exists for the Council to ensure that this full potential is realised.

6.0 Strategic Aims

This Cultural Strategy is not an end in itself, nor does it exist in isolation from other strategies and policies relating to the Borough. National, regional and local influences have all been taken into account in determining the Vision for Culture within the Borough and the priorities for action.

The Borough Challenge exercise has established that having stronger communities is the core element of the overall Vision for the Borough for the next 15 year period. Stronger communities are places where residents are healthy and prosperous take an interest and pride in their community and local environment, are tolerant and supportive, exert an influence over public services and actively use the facilities in their areas.

In seeking to make the Borough a place that is safe, peaceful and attractive, where residents are healthy and prosperous with access to quality learning and employment opportunities there is also a focus on other aspects of living in the Borough that receive equal emphasis.

Consequently challenges to make the Borough a great place for children and young people to live in, where there is a strong sense of community spirit within and across neighbourhoods and the environment is safeguarded and protected for future generations receive equal prominence.

Similarly the unique heritage, diversity and culture of the Borough has been identified as something to be retained, celebrated and enhanced as a key contributor to the future communities and economy of the Borough. These ambitions are challenging and alongside the challenges central government, national and regional agencies in the cultural sector provides Cultural Services with a clear agenda for action, not just to bring about a short-term boost to local cultural activity but to contribute to the overall regeneration of the Borough, socially and economically.

Building 'Stronger Communities' is no easy task so why should a Cultural Strategy be so important enough to make a difference? We believe that there are two fundamental reasons why this is the case.

Firstly it links the work of the Cultural Sector in the Borough to that of others seeking to impact on the quality of life in the area. By working in partnership across agencies and disciplines a bigger, more lasting impact can be made on people's lives as there is clear evidence that culture can contribute to educational, health and economic agendas.

Secondly culture has an intrinsic value that places it at the heart of people's decisions, helping us to have a sense of place, shape our values and give meaning to our lives. That value and consequent benefit of cultural engagement is something that should be afforded everyone in the Borough, but from existing local and national data this is clearly not the case and has to be addressed.

Consequently all parts of the Cultural sector in the Borough need to work together to improve the cultural offer available to residents and visitors to the Borough to stimulate that broader engagement in cultural activity by all sections of the community, in particular those residents that have traditionally disengaged from such activity.

Culture, on its own, is not the sole answer to the social and economic difficulties facing the Borough but broad engagement in cultural activity with the subsequent personal and societal benefits that accrue can contribute to making the Borough a better place to live, work or visit.

Our Three Key Aims

Strategic Aim 1: To increase access to and participation in cultural activity

At the heart of our Cultural Strategy is the fundamental belief in the value that providing access to and increasing participation in cultural activity can derive for individuals not just in the context of their enjoyment of that activity but from wider benefits such as improved health and well-being, learning or quality of life. Providing greater opportunities and access for people to share in the cultural life of the Borough will not just benefit those individuals but will also be of benefit to wider society.

Key issues for the Council and partners to address in the life of this Strategy will be to increase access and participation in cultural activities by currently under represented groups, improving health and well-being in the Borough and providing opportunities for community learning.

Strategic Aim 2: To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices in the Borough

A key factor in attracting people to participate and remain involved in cultural activities is the quality of the cultural product on offer. The Council, with its partners will seek to provide facilities and services of a consistently high standard in particular those aspects of the Borough's cultural heritage that are unique to the area. Similarly it is as important to have an appropriate range of cultural opportunities available within the Borough in order that there is the opportunity to diverse cultural experiences that enlighten and challenge perceptions and leads to greater respect and tolerance within and across communities.

Strategic Aim 3: To stimulate economic and social regeneration within communities

The social and economic benefits derived from a rich, dynamic cultural environment can have a significant impact in transforming quality of life in the Borough and contributing to future success.

A key part in this is the sustainability of the historical, social and physical cultural capital of the Borough, sensitive to both environmental factors and community capacity. There are marked differences in the quality of the environment and community capacity from place to place in the Borough and there is a clear need to focus efforts on specific areas in support of wider community regeneration initiatives.

In order to deliver these three strategic aims we have developed a further 14 objectives which drive the 3 year action plan in section 8 of this document. The following table summarises the Aims and objective of the Cultural Strategy:

| Strategic Aims | Objectives |
|--|---|
| Strategic Aim 1: To increase access to and participation in Cultural Activity | 1a. To take action to address barriers to participation in order to enhance equality of access |
| | 1b. To support the delivery of ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes through Cultural Services |
| | 1c. To maximise opportunities for lifelong learning within the wider community |
| | 1d. To improve peoples health, wellbeing and quality of life through participation in cultural activities |
| | 1e. To utilise cultural activities to deliver improvements in Community Safety |
| Strategic Aim 2: To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices in the Borough | 2a. To maintain and enhance the quality of cultural provision within the Borough |
| | 2b. To protect and develop the industrial and natural heritage of the Borough |
| | 2c. To develop and sustain partnerships with all relevant agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to enhance cultural provision in the area |
| | 2d. To support and sustain diversity of cultural provision in the Borough |
| Strategic Aim 3: To stimulate the Economic and Social Regeneration within communities | 3a. To stimulate to the social regeneration of local communities and build capacity within them |
| | 3b. To enhance and support the Borough’s image and economy through promoting its cultural activity locally, sub regionally, regionally and nationally |
| | 3c. To promote social inclusion and cohesion through participation in cultural activities |
| | 3d. To support the development and sustainability of the creative industries within the Borough |
| | 3e. To ensure cultural issues are at the core of local development frameworks, local planning functions and regeneration opportunities |

7.0 Achievements

The Cultural Strategy builds on an existing foundation with appendix 14.1 illustrating a series of recent outcomes which support each of the strategic aims. The Cultural Strategy will further build on this through a series of key objectives which underpin each of the three strategic aims.

8.0 Strategic Action Plan

8.1 Strategic Aim 1: To increase access to and participation in cultural activity

A key aspiration for the strategy is to increase both the accessibility of Cultural Activities and facilities leading to increased levels of participation by the general public. Certain sections of the community have been traditionally low-participant and greater efforts are required to remove the barriers to participation by such groups. Detailed below are the actions proposed.

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Lead Responsibility | Resources |
|--|---|---|---|------------|
| 1a - To take action to address barriers to participation in order to enhance equality of access | To promote participation in Cultural Services by hard to reach groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audit of barriers to use completed for all service areas (March 2007) ▪ Action plan to address barriers completed (March 2008) ▪ Annual review of prices undertaken (ongoing) ▪ Pricing policy for low participant/ target groups approved by Council annually (ongoing) ▪ Materials in a range of languages/formats provided in libraries (March 2007) ▪ Housebound services provided for customers who cannot use a public library ▪ Work with partners to provide sport and physical activity opportunities in a range of community settings (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Lead Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|--|---|------------|
| | Providing access to Cultural Services through Dudley Council Plus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the overall number of ticket sales issued/sold for Halls through Dudley Council Plus (March 2006) ▪ Establish Dudley Council Plus as an issuing centre for Leisure Options Plus Cards (June 2006) ▪ Review annually access to Cultural Services information via Dudley Council Plus (September 2006 onwards) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | Actively market and promote awareness of Cultural Services with a particular focus on hard to reach groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carry out a triennial review and update of promotional information (Dec 2006) ▪ Produce Marketing Strategy for Cultural Services (March 2007) ▪ Measure effectiveness of Strategy annually (ongoing) ▪ Deliver online access to collections databases (March 2009) ▪ Carry out an annual review of website information (ongoing) ▪ 50% of all publicity materials to be available in all community languages (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Lead Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50% publicity information available in Braille and large print (March 2007) ▪ 50% publicity targeted for young people (March 2007) ▪ Participation in Health Information Promotions | | |
| | Increase levels of engagement with service users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ User forums established at 50% facilities (March 2007) & 100% facilities (March 2008) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Race Equality review action plans delivered (ongoing) ▪ Three yearly programme of surveys completed to plan as part of national survey programme for all Cultural Services (ongoing) ▪ Public consultation undertaken on all services biennially (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | Increase participation in sport and physical activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roll out Active Dudley – Walkzone internet interface across Dudley (Dec 2006) ▪ Everyday Sport campaign integrated into all promotion of physical activity and sport ▪ Work with Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership to develop and deliver the Healthy Communities project (March 2008) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning Primary Care Trust | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|--|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to date information on local sports clubs accessible on Community Information Database | | |
| | Address implication of DDA for all Cultural Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self Audit completed on all Culture & Community Services buildings (Jun 2006) ▪ Leisure centre DDA priority 1 improvements completed (March 2007) ▪ Feasibility studies completed for lift access at Dudley Museum and Art Gallery, Dudley Concert Hall and Broadfield House Glass Museum (April 2007) ▪ Approved DDA improvements programme implemented (March 2009) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Provide managed sports & recreation programmes in community settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School facilities with potential for extended/ community use identified (March 2007) ▪ Management and financial arrangements agreed with respective governing bodies (March 2008) ▪ Funding of community use identified (March 2009) | Culture and Community Services Division Primary Care Trust | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|---|--|---|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programmes/activities provided from April 2009 ▪ Multiuse games areas provided in 25% wards (March 2007) ▪ Skate Parks provided in each township area (March 2009) | | |
| 1b – To support the delivery of ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes through Cultural Services | Provision of programmes of cultural activity to enhance Children and Young Peoples Physical and Mental Well-being (Be Healthy) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active Dudley project delivered for pre-school/training provided to all nursery units within the Borough (March 2009) ▪ Sportlink programme delivered to 75% schools (March 2009) ▪ Provision of high quality PE and sport in schools curriculum delivery (ongoing) ▪ Sports sessions organised and delivered in Borough parks (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Dudley Health and Well being Partnership | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme of events and exhibitions developed at Arts and Entertainment venues specifically for Children and Young People (December 2006) ▪ Deliver annual programmes (JAM Club) at museums (on-going) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|--|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme/GP referral for Children and Young People implemented (March 2008) | PCT | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Activities and stock for children provided in Libraries ▪ Archive information packs for use in schools developed ▪ Archives outreach programme developed (March 2010) | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | Provision of accessible facilities and activities to enable Children and Young People to enjoy their leisure time (Enjoy and Achieve) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme of sports activities provided in all leisure centres during all school holiday periods (April 2006) ▪ Disability Sportszone operated at Crystal Leisure Centre during school holiday periods (ongoing) ▪ Disability Sportszone introduced at Dudley Leisure Centre (August 2006) ▪ Free sports sessions for looked after children introduced through community sports coaching scheme/gymnastics programme/holiday courses (April 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriately stocked children's libraries for homework support and activities throughout the year provided (ongoing) | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Play Strategy produced (March 2007) ▪ Sports specific development programme delivered for target sports Basketball/Gymnastics/Hockey/Rugby (ongoing) ▪ Feasibility study for joint working with National Youth Theatre and Brierley Hill Civic Hall completed (December 2006) ▪ 25% sports clubs achieving Clubmark accreditation (March 2007) ▪ 50% sports clubs achieving Clubmark accreditation (March 2008) ▪ Agree model for community use of school sports and arts facilities to be rolled out borough-wide (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|---|------------|
| | Provision of Safe Environments for Children and Young People to pursue cultural activities (Stay Safe) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring that 100% of the Council's and its partner agencies and voluntary sector organisations are operating in accordance with DMBC Child Protection Policy (March 2009) ▪ Provision and maintenance of play areas compliant with relevant British and European safety standards (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learn to Swim programmes provided throughout the borough (ongoing) ▪ New Safe cycling proficiency standard adopted/implement (March 2007) ▪ Provision of locally accessible play and recreation facilities designed for Children and Young People (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Provision of opportunities for Children and Young People to develop socially and emotionally through the provision of purposeful cultural activities (Make a Positive Contribution) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PAYP programme delivered in partnership with Connexions (ongoing) ▪ Leaps and Bounds completed (October 2006) ▪ Feasibility Study for Phase 2 completed (July 2006) | Chief Executives Directorate Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning Connexions | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|--|--|---|------------------------------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of activities, events and reading groups for children and young people (ongoing) ▪ Annual involvement in Black Country Youth Games maintained (ongoing) | | |
| | To support Children and Young Peoples educational attainment through participation in Cultural activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of Community Sports Leaders Award (CSLA) courses with a link to AWM funded Pathways to Employment Through Sport (PETS) initiative (ongoing) ▪ Provision of education service and production of education materials at museums and nature reserves in line with national curriculum (ongoing) ▪ Provision of coach education courses and programmes (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC Advantage West Midlands |
| 1c - To maximise opportunities for lifelong learning within the wider community | To promote the use of Libraries as centres of lifelong learning within local communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of first rung learning support at library sites ▪ Provision of stock to support formal and informal learning | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|--|--|-------------------------|
| | Provision of learning materials supported by homework clubs and activities e.g. local history talks, courses on using archives effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Numbers attending homework clubs increased (ongoing) ▪ Book issues increased (ongoing) ▪ Use of Public Access computers increased (ongoing) ▪ Provision and support of events at libraries and archives to support leisure and focussed family learning ▪ Provision of support and information to help customers locate opportunities through the provision of community information online and in libraries | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | Work in partnership to implement the Family learning Strategy Action Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family Learning DVD July 2006 | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC and partners |
| | Improve areas of learning curriculum to meet the needs of learners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular meetings with tutors, managers and Areas of Learning meetings/conferences | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC and partners |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|--|---|-------------------------|
| | Work in partnership to promote and deliver learning opportunities for older people in local communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training the trainer work established ▪ Curriculum developed ▪ Recruitment targets for older learners met | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC and partners |
| | Work with other providers to ensure co-ordinated learning in the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased participation in learning from targeted groups ▪ Agreement on adult learning delivery within college partnership | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC and partners |
| | Work with voluntary and community support networks to identify group needs for progression into learning programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased participation in learning from targeted groups | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC and partners |
| | Increase number of people participating in Museum Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exhibitions at non-traditional venues staged and provision of a touring exhibition service (ongoing) ▪ Quality of display and interpretation across the Museums Service improved (ongoing) ▪ Outreach service to include glass as well as geology developed (March 2008) ▪ Tour guide service at Red House Cone and Broadfield House developed (March 2008) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Museum websites improved with online access to collections database (March 2009) ▪ Increased usage of Museum Services as measured by BVPI's (ongoing) | | |
| | Provide a range of activities that contribute to the development of physical literacy and lifelong participation in physical activity and sport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver an annual programme of swimming lessons at all public pools (ongoing) ▪ Deliver an annual programme of sports coaching in all leisure centres and in other community settings (ongoing) ▪ Upskill existing sports workforce through education & training programmes with national governing bodies of sport & other agencies such as SkillsActive (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Directorate of Children's Services | Dudley MBC |
| | Provision of training and education programmes to support the development of the cultural sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased number of sports personnel from public and voluntary sector accessing courses (March 2007) ▪ A programme of targeted training and support delivered for Friends of Parks groups (September 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division Directorate of Adult, Community & Housing Services | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Dudley Concert Orchestra with workshops and regular concerts in the Borough's venues (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| 1d - To improve peoples health, well being and quality of life through participation in cultural activities | Implement the action plan for the Obesity Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actions identified from Obesity Strategy and 3 year action plan produced (April 2006) ▪ Physical and mental health benefits identified in all promotional literature (ongoing) | Physical Activity Task Group (PATG) Culture and Community Services Division Brierley Hill and Pensnett Healthy Neighbourhoods Partnership | Dudley Community Partnership Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Impact Assessment recommendations for Brierley Hill area implemented (April 2006) ▪ Increase participation in sport and physical activity by 3% in the next three years (March 2009) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of ASA learn to swim curriculum for all swimming tuition (September 2006) ▪ Further expand the GP exercise referral scheme in partnership with PCT learning from pilot activities (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division PCT | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|---|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve health and fitness offer in leisure centres (March 2007) | | |
| | Provide opportunities for the development and promotion of community and amateur arts activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the delivery of visual arts programmes (April 2006) Increased audience for amateur productions at Brierley Hill Civic Hall and Stourbridge Town Hall (ongoing) Programme of small scale theatre productions developed in partnership with Black Country Touring (September 2006) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Contribute to a Black Country Wide events Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake Events Festival audit across Black Country (December 2006) Creation of Black Country Events Strategy (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division Economic Regeneration Division Black Country Events Strategy Black Country Arts Partnership | Dudley MBC Black Country Tourism Black Country Arts Partnership Arts Council West Midlands |
| | Promote a diverse programme of entertainments and events in Halls (including Himley Hall) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of Annual Winter Season programme (ongoing) Increase number of people attending events, with increased range of events (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|--|------------|
| | Promote use of and appreciation of natural heritage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare annual programme of Parks and Countryside activities (ongoing) ▪ Increase number of people attending events (annually) ▪ Increase the number of externally organised events staged in Borough parks and green spaces annually (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Promote increased physical activity in parks and green spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual Programme of Countryside Services walks and activities produced (April 2006) ▪ Increased participation levels on Dudley Borough Trail (annually) ▪ Outdoor events and activity programmes for parks and green spaces developed (December 2006) | Culture and Community Services Division Primary Care Trust BTCV Dudley Horticultural Advisory Council | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan implemented (ongoing) ▪ Green Gym project delivered on green spaces throughout the Borough (ongoing) ▪ Increased levels of take up of allotments and development of new sites (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|---|---|------------|
| | Improving the availability of information on exercise and mental health issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of events and activities promoting health and physical activity ▪ Provision of information on location of events, clubs and societies and training opportunities | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | Promote increased physical activity in indoor settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support and promote tea-dances and ballroom dance events at Dudley Concert Hall (ongoing) ▪ The number of leisure centre members increased by 10% (March 2007) ▪ The number of visitors to leisure centres increased by 1% per annum (March 2009) ▪ The number of swims per annum at the four major centres with pools increased by 5% (March 2007) ▪ Expand the range of physical activity opportunities at leisure centres by direct delivery of programmes or in partnership with third parties (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| 1e - To utilise cultural activities to deliver improvements in Community Safety | Support partnership working between, communities, police and Council to reduce crime/vandalism and anti-social behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver Positive Activities for Young People programme with an annual review (May 2006) ▪ Work with Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to provide sport and physical activity opportunities as diversionary activities (ongoing) ▪ Policing and security measures supported including CCTV and improved street lighting within Town Centres (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division Chief Executives Directorate Black Country LSC Community Safety Connexions Town Centre Mgt Youth Offending Team Business Crime Partnership | Dudley MBC |
| | To improve perception of safety in parks and open spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Liveability physical improvements to be developed in accordance with the Safer by Design guidelines (ongoing) ▪ Review the Parks Keepers' service (April 2007) | Cultural and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Support partnership working between communities police and Council to reduce crime/vandalism and antisocial behaviour in all green spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish Park Watch across all Liveability Parks (ongoing) ▪ Support and extend Reserve Watch schemes on Nature Reserves (ongoing) | Cultural and Community Services Division West Midlands Police DCP Safe and Sound Partnership | Dudley MBC Liveability Fund |

8.2 Strategic Aim 2: To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available within the borough

In order to make cultural activity available and attractive to residents of the Borough it is vital that there is a diverse range of activities available to enable people to exercise choice, and that the product on offer is of a high quality. The Borough has a proud heritage in terms of both its sporting and artistic traditions and key to the future success of this strategy are the twin strands of quality and choice. This relates not just to the standard of built facilities but also to management of actions and the actions below indicate what is planned in the coming period.

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| 2a - To maintain and enhance the quality of cultural provision within the Borough | Continue to improve the quality of displays and interpretation across the Museums Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trial different approaches with user groups (ongoing) ▪ Obtain feedback from visitors (ongoing) ▪ Identify funding bodies and submit applications for grant aid (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC Heritage Lottery Fund Museums, Libraries and Archives Council |
| | Improve and develop the unique and nationally important collections for glass and geology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 year focus on collections management by transferring 80% records to CALM data base (October 2007) ▪ Develop and catalogue the Stuart Crystal Collection (October 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Improve the quality of provision of Archives Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feasibility plan for new archive building completed (April 2007) ▪ Archives Services opened at new site (December 2008) ▪ Range of archive material available electronically increased (ongoing) | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|--|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of archive materials not catalogued fully reduced (ongoing) | | |
| | Continuously improve the quality of parks and green-spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of masterplans for Liveability sites (Sept.2007) ▪ Assess all Liveability parks against the Green flag Standard (March 2007) ▪ Improve parks Green flag rating through the Liveability Project (March 2008) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management of the two national collections for rudbeckia and ceanothus (ongoing) ▪ Attain 2 Green flag awards (2008/09) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Continuously improve the quality of the museum service and access to collections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete feasibility study into the amalgamation of Broadfield House and Red House Glass Cone (March 2008) ▪ Decide on future location of glass library and archives in consultation with Local History and Archives Dept'. Agree plan of action for storage and access (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|--|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop long term strategy for development of geological and fine art collections and the Brooke Robinson Museum (March 2009) | | |
| | Maintain and improve the quality of the Museum's collections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update Acquisitions and Disposals Policy and review every five years (March 2009) ▪ Secure funding for appropriate acquisitions (ongoing) ▪ Undertake 'rationalisation' of the collections where appropriate (ongoing) ▪ BS5454 attained and HMC standards for Archive storage achieved (December 2011) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC Heritage Lottery Fund Victoria and Albert Museum |
| | Maintain Registered Status for the Council's Museums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement recommended documentation procedures and draw up action plans to eliminate cataloguing backlogs (September 2008) ▪ Provide suitable display and storage conditions to prevent deterioration of the collections (September 2008) ▪ Maintain and improve the security of museum buildings and draw up Disaster Plan (September 2008) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake customer surveys on a regular basis (ongoing) Submit application for accreditation (March 2009) | | |
| | Encourage participation in National Quality Assurance Schemes for Accommodation/attractions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work on VAQAS recognition for attractions in Borough (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Economic Development Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Improve and develop the unique assets of Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Heritage Lottery Fund application for the stabilisation of the Seven Sisters Mines, Interpretation Centre and access improvements for the NNR (To be submitted Dec 06) Develop the Wren's Nest element of the Black Country as Urban Park application to the Big Lottery Funds Living Landmarks programme. (May 2007) Develop bids for further phases of work (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC Heritage Lottery Fund Natural England Big Lottery Fund |
| | Secure funding to improve cultural facilities within the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of the major NOF3 projects (ongoing) Leisure Centre Strategy implementation (ongoing) Submit Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Stourbridge Town Hall (April 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|--|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop the North Wing of Himley Hall (December 2007) ▪ Submit Heritage Lottery Fund Bid for Main Gate and West Gate refurbishment of Himley Hall (March 2008) ▪ Support maintenance of Dudley Castle, Manor Abbey, Priory Ruin, Ruiton Mill, Halesowen Church (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Continuously improve the quality of the service delivered to the customer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ QUEST achieved at all Leisure Centres (July 2007) ▪ QUEST achieved by Sports Development (February 2007) ▪ Three year QUEST renewal in each area (ongoing) ▪ Towards an Excellent Service (TAES) self assessment completed for Sport & Recreation Service (March 2007) ▪ Principles of TAES applied throughout Cultural Services delivered by the Council (March 2008) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| 2b - To protect and develop the industrial and natural heritage of the Borough | Continue to support the work on the World Heritage Bid Aspiration for the Black Country Canal Network | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expert Panel set up and met (July 2005) ▪ Formalise Steering Group (November 2005) ▪ Black CC appoints World Heritage coordinator | Economic Regeneration Division Black Country Consortium | Dudley MBC Black Country Consortium |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft Statement of Significance prepared (April 2006) | | |
| | Establish a Geo-tourism framework (including development work for Geopark Status) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft Geo-tourism strategy completed (Winter 2006) ▪ Geopark integrated into Black Country Study ▪ Geopark bid prepared (January 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division Economic Regeneration Division Black Country Consortium | Dudley MBC Black Country Local Authorities |
| | Continue to support and develop the canal network in Dudley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projects to implement Black Country Canals Tourism Strategy in relation to available funding developed (ongoing) ▪ Review policy within Dudley Borough Canal Strategy ▪ Develop and promote canals in Dudley working with British Waterways (ongoing) ▪ Development of Canal Trusts trips and talks (ongoing) | Economic Regeneration Division British Waterways Dudley and Stourbridge Canal Trusts | AWM ERDF/GOWM Dudley MBC Black Country Consortium |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|--|---|--|
| | Ensure the long term sustainable management and development of the Borough's Green Space assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a Green Space Strategy for the Borough which is PPG17 compliant (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC Big Lottery Fund CABE Space |
| | Continue to support & develop the management of Council Owned Local Nature Reserves and areas of nature conservation value | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieve the PSA target of 1 hectare of designated Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 head of population (ongoing) ▪ Maintain the 100% rating of favourable/recovering status for SSSIs against the PSA target of 95% (March 2010) ▪ Continue to manage the Fens Pools Special Area of Conservation (SAC) ▪ Deliver the objectives of the Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan (on-going) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Restoration of the Leasowes Grade I listed historic landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leasowes promotional material completed (April 2006) ▪ Completion of phase 1 of the restoration (December 2007) ▪ Development of bids for further phases of the work (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC Heritage Lottery Fund |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| 2c - To develop and sustain partnerships with all relevant agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to enhance cultural provision in the area | Continue to support the Black Country Tourism initiative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support delivery of Advancing Tourism in the Black Country (Black Country Tourism) (ongoing) ▪ Support development of Destination Management Partnership for Black Country (ongoing) | Economic Regeneration Division Black Country Consortium Black Country Investment Black Country Tourism | Dudley MBC Black Country Local Authorities Black Country Consortium AWM Private sector |
| | Contribute to the development of the Black Country Sports Partnership (BCSP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BCSP structure and link with Black Country Consortium agreed (December 2005) ▪ 3 year plan and vision to 2033 submitted to Regional Sports Board (RSB) (February 2006) ▪ Funding for three year plan agreed by RSB (April 2006) ▪ Delivery of 3 year plan (April 2006 to December 2009) ▪ Audit sport and recreation providers completed (May 2006) | Culture and Community Services Division Black Country Consortium | Dudley MBC Black Country Consortium Sport England |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain approval for action plan from Playing Pitch Strategy (June 2006) ▪ Sports and Recreation Strategy revised (April 2007) ▪ Implement recommendations from Playing Pitch Strategy (March 2009) | Culture and Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|---|--|---|---|------------|
| | To ensure cultural activities are embedded within the work of the Dudley Community Partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a Cultural Theme group of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) (April 2006) ▪ Support the working of the Environmental Task Group of the LSP (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning Directorate of Children's Services PCT Managed Neighbourh'ds | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the working of the Physical Activity Task Group of the LSP (ongoing) ▪ Culture specific outcome incorporated into Local Area Agreement (April 2007) | | |
| 2d - To support and sustain diversity of cultural provision in the Borough | To utilise the resources of the Council to encourage diversity of provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resources retained within Council to support diversity of activities (ongoing) ▪ Evidence from Community Panel used to shape diversity of provision (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to cultural voluntary sector provided (ongoing) ▪ Importance of public perception of cultural services within the Borough raised through the Community Panel's ranking (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|--|------------|
| | Working in partnership with regional agencies involved in cultural activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council represented on sub regional and regional agencies (ongoing) ▪ Agreed local delivery plans for sub regional and regional strategies (March 2007) ▪ Identification of appropriate funding streams to support the implementation of local delivery plans (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| | Exploring alternative mechanisms for the delivery of cultural services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market testing exercise for Leisure Centre Management completed (June 2007) ▪ Feasibility study for National Youth Theatre regional centre completed (March 2007) ▪ Review of existing lease arrangements completed (March 2007) ▪ Outcomes of Groundforce project evaluated as a means of delivery (March 2008) ▪ Review of Library Service completed (August 2006) ▪ Implementation plan for remodelling Library Service (March 2007) ▪ Feasibility Study of Dudley Sports Village undertaken (December 2006) | Cultural and Community Services Division Directorate of Adult, Community & Housing Services | Dudley MBC |

8.3 Strategic Aim 3: To stimulate economic and social regeneration within communities

Cultural activity contributes to the economic and social regeneration of the Borough in a number of ways. Cultural industries help to create wealth within the local economy in particular through the areas pre-eminence in glass and geology. Cultural activities are also one of the most successful mechanisms for increasing community interaction and social cohesion. The actions detailed below indicate what is planned in the coming period.

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|--|---|---|------------|
| 3a - To stimulate the social regeneration of local communities and build capacity within them | Promote sustainable community involvement with the regeneration of Parks and Greenspaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver the Liveability Local Involvement Programme leading to a sustainable Friends Network (September 2007) ▪ Training provided by Future Skills for local unemployed people in Horticulture, Landscaping, Fencing and General Construction (September 2007) | Culture & Community Services Division Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Promote sustainable community involvement in the Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dudley Arts Council operating independently (April 2006) ▪ Deliver Regional Puissance Project in partnership with Staffordshire Local Authority and Walsall MBC ▪ Programme of exhibitions to celebrate local artists insitu (April 2006) | Culture & Community Services Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Develop Library Services to ensure they meet the needs of users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation plan for remodelling Library Service completed (March 2007) | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3b - To enhance and support the Borough's image and economy through promoting its cultural activity locally, regionally and nationally | Feed into a unified Black Country-wide approach to visitor information services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sub regional visitor signposting and orientation plan completed (April 2006) ▪ Identification of main visitor routes and plan for maintenance/management (June 2006) ▪ Implementation of Plan (June 2006 onwards) ▪ Tourism West Midlands review visitor information (2006/07) ▪ Findings of Tourism West Midlands used to develop Black Country Tourism brief for study (2007/08) ▪ Black Country Tourism study produced 2008/09) | Economic Regeneration Division Tourism West Midlands Black Country Tourism | Dudley MBC Black Country Tourism |
| | Deliver an annual programme of Public Art | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commissions received for Public Art work (ongoing) ▪ Commissions delivered annually (ongoing) ▪ Annual review of Public Art work undertaken | Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC Centro Other Midland Local Authorities Primary Care Trust |
| | Promote the image of the Borough's Culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a unified Marketing Plan for Cultural Services and activities (March 2007) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|---|---|--|---|------------|
| | Continued engagement in international initiatives with partner organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with Sport Dudley and Bremer Sportjugend to deliver the annual Sports Exchange at Easter (ongoing) ▪ Support the International Festival of Glass (every two years) ▪ Dudley Performing Arts cultural exchanges and Youth Arts Tours (ongoing) | Culture and Community Services Division Directorate of Children's Services Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| 3c - To promote social inclusion and cohesion through participation in cultural activities | Increase use of Culture Services by low participant or under represented groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Issues of library stock to socially excluded members of the community increased (ongoing) ▪ Issues of library stock on foster care tickets increased (ongoing) ▪ Sporting Equals accreditation attained (March 2007) ▪ Dudley Performing Arts targeted projects to engage BME community (e.g. African Drumming for schools) | Culture and Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning Directorate of Children's Services | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IPAQ targets for sports participation reviewed among social groups D/E and by BME groups (April 2006) ▪ Stage outdoor events in priority areas for young people (ongoing) | Culture & Community Services Division Chief Executives Directorate | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|--|---|---|--|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High satisfaction levels for users of the Housebound Library Service maintained (ongoing) | Culture & Community Services Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |
| 3d - To support the development and sustainability of the creative industries within the Borough | Encourage the development of the Borough's creative industries sector in particular visual arts and glass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of hot glass studios at both Broadfield House and Red House Glass Cone (ongoing) ▪ Provide studio units at Redhouse Glass Cone (ongoing) ▪ Support the International Glass Centre, Brierley Hill, and assist with the staging of 1st and 2nd Gather (ongoing) ▪ Development of Netherton Arts Centre as an exhibition space and a centre for arts education (March 2009) | Culture and Community Services Division Advantage West Midlands (Net Infinity Centre) | Dudley MBC |
| 3e – To ensure cultural issues are at the core of local development frameworks, local planning functions and regeneration opportunities | Ensure Master Plans and delivery vehicles for Brierley Hill, Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge are able to deliver safe, attractive, vibrant and sustainable town centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Area Action Plan adopted for Dudley Town Centre (January 2006) | Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|---|---------------------------|---|---|------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public consultation for Stourbridge Town Centre completed (January 2007) ▪ Area Action Plan adopted (December 2008) | Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public consultation for Brierley Hill Town Centre completed (April 2007) ▪ Area Action Plan adopted (July 2008) | Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commence preparation for public consultation for Halesowen Town Centre (July 2008) | Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC |
| Maximise opportunities for events in the Borough's town centre spaces | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional funding for town centre events secured (July 2006) ▪ Delivery arrangements for town centre events confirmed (September 2006) ▪ Events programme for town centres launched (October 2006) | Culture and Community Services Division Economic Regeneration Division Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning | Dudley MBC |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| | To maintain and improve the physical infrastructure and historic fabric within the Borough of Dudley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Dudley Stage 2 bid to set out detailed implementation for the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) (June 2006) ▪ Gain approval from the Heritage Lottery Fund for THI Stage 2 implementation plan (October 2006) ▪ Commence 5 year grant scheme for THI (April 2007) ▪ Develop and gain approval for an investment plan for leisure centres (March 2007) ▪ Implementation of investment plan for leisure centres (March 2009) | Development and Environmental Protection Division Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC Heritage Lottery Fund |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete conservation area character appraisal for Stourbridge Town Centre (October 2006) ▪ Development of a Management Plan for Stourbridge Conservation Area (March 2007) ▪ Establish feasibility of accessing external funding for Management Plan (September 2007) | Development and Environmental Protection Division Economic Regeneration Division | Dudley MBC Heritage Lottery Fund |

| Objective | Actions 2006/07 - 2008/09 | Key Milestones | Responsibility | Resources |
|-----------|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commence listed buildings at risk strategy throughout the Borough (April 2006) ▪ Populate Historic Environment Record (HER) (ongoing) ▪ Set priorities and identify buildings at risk for intervention (Sept 2006) | Development and Environmental Protection Division | Dudley MBC |
| | Develop Castle Hill for World Class Heritage attraction whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and historic heritage of the area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outline bid by Regeneration Zone Board and AWM approved ▪ ERDF funding secured ▪ Development agreement signed ▪ Determination of outline planning application following submission by St Modwen ▪ Determination by GOWM not to call in planning application ▪ Planning approved subject to 106 agreement ▪ Start on Site 2006 ▪ Completion anticipated by March 2011 | Economic Regeneration Division Culture and Community Services Division Development and Environmental Protection Division St Modwen | Dudley MBC AWM ERDF/GOWM |

9.0 Resources

The Strategy recognises that the cultural sector is a complex, fragmented place that needs bringing together for mutual benefit. The public private and voluntary sectors are all key providers of cultural activity and it is vital that they work together to effect a real change in participation rates within the Borough. The public sector in particular has numerous agencies who could come together in a more coherent fashion than at present to deliver enhanced co-operative working in the delivery of their respective agendas e.g. health improvement, community safety, community cohesion and educational attainment.

The Council is the largest provider of cultural activity within the public sector yet this provision takes a number of forms and is delivered through different bodies; Dudley Performing Arts, Leisure Services, Library and Archives Services, Schools and Colleges, Youth Services. Increased co-ordination of effort through this Cultural Strategy will result in more co-operative working and better outcomes for local people.

A number of key decisions will need to be made regarding the priority of Cultural Services within the Council and the priorities within Cultural Services. With the exception of the Library and Archives Service there is no statutory basis for any of the services encompassed within the Cultural Services definition, yet the importance of sport, the arts, heritage, parks and open spaces to the fabric of Borough life has never been more apparent.

Partnership working with other public sector organisations is of paramount importance and the development of strong private and voluntary culture sectors is essential for the successful delivery of this Strategy.

Significant opportunities exist for Cultural Services to secure funds to support the implementation of this Strategy from external sources, especially where cultural activities are supporting the delivery of wider social objectives such as improving health, contributing to the reduction of anti-social behaviour and increasing academic/educational attainment and providing employment and training opportunities within the cultural industries. The Council has already accessed public sector funds from the Lottery, Advantage West Midlands and the Department for Communities and Local Government in support of this agenda, whilst there are other opportunities to fund initiatives through the prudential finance code. In particular we would want to find more opportunities to work more closely with the AWM initiatives, the Net Infinity Centre at UCE and Digital Central to support improved business competitiveness for the creative industries specifically glass and music respectively.

In particular the Department for Communities and Local Government Liveability Programme has provided significant funding to begin a renaissance of parks facilities within the Borough whilst the Lottery Sports Fund has supported the provision of new facilities and projects in the area. In addition the Council is able to utilise resources obtained as part of new developments in the Borough to support the Strategy but one of the biggest challenges for the Council will be how the prioritisation of its own resources delivers the on-going sustainable provision of Cultural Services. This will require the Council to take some difficult decisions between the differing Cultural Services that it currently provides in order to focus funding on areas that contribute significantly to the outcomes required by this Strategy.

10.0 Equality and Diversity

The Council's Equality and Diversity Policy presents the overall policy framework for equality and diversity for the Authority, in terms of both employment and service provision. Reviewed on a regular basis, it is underpinned by the Council's Race Equality Scheme, which is a statutory document, and set's out the Council's approach to promoting race equality. In the near future, the Authority will formulate a broader Equality Scheme, which will also encompass the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to produce a Disability Equality Scheme. Other equalities legislation that may arise, requiring identified equality schemes, could also be encompassed within the anticipated corporate Equality Scheme, further reinforcing the Council's commitment to minority or disadvantaged groups.

The Equality and Diversity Policy requires each Directorate to produce, on an annual basis, both an action plan (which identifies key equality and diversity targets for each directorate) and an annual report (relating to the achievement of objectives outlined in the previous year). The action plan and annual report do not stand in isolation, but are contributory documents to be utilised as part of the business planning process.

All of the activities referred to in this Cultural Strategy, including sport, the arts, tourism, libraries, the built and natural environment, and recreation, are available to our many and diverse clients and customers. Only through consultation with such users the Cultural Services identify and respond to their many and varied needs. Our consultation, and needs assessment, will continue to be on-going, in a variety of forums, in an attempt to satisfy the community, and the general public, that we serve.

In accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, the Division will seek to ensure that none of its employees or service users will receive less favourable treatment on any grounds which cannot be shown to be justified, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, marital status, responsibility

for children or other dependants, disability, sexual orientation, trans sexuality, age, trades union or political activities, social class, where the person lives, or spent convictions. In addition, when working in partnership with other organisations, the Culture and Community Division will encourage all other organisations to adopt the same commitment.

11.0 Culture and Community Cohesion

The Borough celebrates the diverse cultural expressions of its residents, providing opportunities for residents and visitors to explore and experience these expressions. Cultural activities have a key role to play to integrate the different cultures of the Borough giving visibility to those differences and create a sense of belonging and shared identity.

The ethnic minority communities of the Borough have brought with them their own traditional cultures which have added significantly to the cultural life of the Borough, as well as helping to drive forward further integration, tolerance and respect.

In addition to addressing cohesion issues relating to the Borough's diverse population, cultural activities also have a place in binding communities together in the context of 'a sense of place' a cultural consciousness of an area. There are also many examples of the ways in which cultural activities and projects have been used to address intergenerational issues within communities to create better understanding across age groups and better engagement in community life.

Culture is an important avenue to engage people, to bring them in, in an effort to change the appearance/perception of an area. Cultural activities which involve large numbers of people in doing things together have been shown to build social capital in even the most deprived or divided communities.

Across the Council there are many Directorates working to promote community cohesion through cultural activities and these actions have been captured and incorporated within the Cultural Strategy action plan.

12.0 Sustainability and Cultural Activities

Cultural provision has an important role to play in enhancing the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Borough by improving people's quality of life not only now but in the future – this is known as sustainable development.

An important part of achieving this is making sure that we have a good quality built and natural environment across the Borough. This will not only attract visitors to the Borough, but will also maximise the contribution that tourism, culture and leisure activities can make to the economy including local training and employment provision, and also local opportunities for cultural activity.

Key to providing local cultural provision is improvements to the quality and usability of parks and open spaces of the Borough and also venues and built facilities for leisure and culture. The quality of the cultural infrastructure needs to be protected and sustainably managed for future generations. This means taking into account factors such as accessibility to sites and venues by means other than the private car, pollution levels and opportunities to reduce energy, waste and water consumption across sites and buildings.

In terms of promoting social well-being, the aspiration is to provide as wider access as possible for cultural opportunities to all sections of society. This is not just in terms of engendering cultural entitlement but also in terms of the wider benefits such as improving the health of people by taking regular exercise and reducing anti-social behaviour through participation in positive activities.

The role that sustainable development has in promoting cultural activities is articulated and recognised throughout this strategy, and through on-going monitoring and review it will be delivered.

13.0 Performance Management

The Cultural Strategy is supported by sixteen key performance indicators to determine both impact respecting the implementation of the actions set out within the Cultural Strategy and also the direction of travel. The performance indicators are consistent with those identified within the Council Action Plan, Best Value Performance Plan and other relevant strategies and in particular underpin one or more of the three strategic aims of the Cultural Strategy.

With regard to Cultural Strategy Performance Management this may be seen from the following three perspectives:

- From a Member perspective, the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education will have a scrutiny role respecting performance targets and performance management.
- Corporately, the performance indicators will be a part of the Council's performance management system subject to quarterly monitoring reports.
- Within the Directorate of the Urban Environment (DUE) and the Directorate of Adult and Community Services (DACHS), where the performance indicators are included within Service Plans, these will be monitored by the Directorate's Senior Management Team.

The performance indicators underpinning this Cultural Strategy will also take account of future developments including:

- The Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education and the role of scrutiny in performance and performance management
- The development of more detailed performance indicators at Service, Divisional and Directorate level
- An acknowledgement of the limitations with the current range of performance indicators, made by the Audit Commission, and the emergence in 2006 of a proposed set of new performance indicators which will be used to measure future performance assessments of Cultural Services under the new Comprehensive Performance Management framework.
- For example, the DCMS ARE WORKING WITH THE Tourism Performance Management Advisory Group to develop a draft set of PIs to be considered for inclusion in the Cultural Services 'Block' of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). Based on Customer and Stakeholder Satisfaction; Efficiency; and Accommodation Quality, the PIs are currently being consulted on.
- The emergence of a Cultural Theme Group, as part of the Local Strategic Partnership, and the further work in developing robust performance indicators.

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|--------|--|--|--|--|
| BV119a | % of residents by targeted group very satisfied/satisfied with the authority's cultural & recreational activities (Sport & Leisure Facilities) | To determine the provision of quality services within sport & leisure facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Sport and Recreation Strategy ▪ Playing Pitch Strategy ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| BV119b | % of residents by targeted group very satisfied/satisfied with the authority's libraries | To determine the provision of quality services within libraries services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Library Services Plan 2005-2008 ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning |
| BV119c | % of residents by targeted group very satisfied/satisfied with authority's cultural and recreational activities (Museums/ Galleries) | To determine the provision of quality services within museums/ galleries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| BV119d | Satisfaction with arts activities and venues | To determine the provision of quality services within arts activities and venues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' | Culture & Community Services Division |

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|--------|---|---|---|---|
| BV119e | Satisfaction with parks and open spaces | To determine the provision of quality services within parks and open spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Regeneration Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| BV170a | Number of visits to/usage of LA funded or part-funded museums in the per 1000 population | To determine usage and increase participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| BV170b | Number of those visits to LA funded, or part-funded museums that were in person per 1000 population | To determine usage and increase participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| BV170c | Number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups | To increase participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| BV219a | Total number of conservation areas in the local authority area | To preserve areas of special architectural or historic interest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Regeneration Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Development and Environmental Protection Division |

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|------------------|---|--|---|---|
| BV219b | Percentage of conservation areas in the local authority with an up to date character appraisal | To preserve areas of special architectural or historic interest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Regeneration Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Development and Environmental Protection Division |
| BV219c | Percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals | To preserve areas of special architectural or historic interest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Regeneration Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Development and Environmental Protection Division |
| BV220 | Compliance under the Public Library Service Standards (PLSS) | Library authorities are required to provide a 'comprehensive and efficient' library services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Best Value Performance Plan ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning |
| New for CPA 2006 | % of adults (16+) participating in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation (including recreational walking) on 3 or more days a week | To increase participation in physical activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Culture & Community Services Division |

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|---------------------|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| New for CPA 2006 | % of population of adults (16+) volunteering in sport and recreation for at least one hour per week | To increase participation in physical activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 ‘To increase access to and participation in cultural activity’ ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 ‘To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities’ | Culture & Community Services Division |
| New for CPA 2006 | Usage of sport and leisure facilities by social groups 6 and 7 | To increase usage of sport and leisure facilities by under represented groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 ‘To increase access to and participation in cultural activity’ ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 ‘To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities’ | Culture & Community Services Division |
| New for CPA 2006 | Usage of sport and leisure facilities by 11 to 19 year olds | To increase usage of sport and leisure facilities by 11 to 19 year olds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 ‘To increase access to and participation in cultural activity’ ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 ‘To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities’ | Culture & Community Services Division |
| New for CPA 2006 | Usage of sport and leisure facilities by Black and Minority Ethnic groups | To increase usage of sport and leisure facilities by Black and Minority Ethnic groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 ‘To increase access to and participation in cultural activity’ ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 ‘To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities’ | Culture & Community Services Division |

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|---------------------|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| New for CPA 2006 | Usage of sport and leisure facilities by those aged 60+ | To increase usage of sport and leisure facilities by those aged 60+ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 ‘To increase access to and participation in cultural activity’ ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 ‘To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities’ | Culture & Community Services Division |
| New for CPA 2006 | Usage of sport and leisure facilities by disabled groups (aged under 60) | To increase usage of sport and leisure facilities by disabled groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Caring Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 ‘To increase access to and participation in cultural activity’ ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 ‘To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities’ | Culture & Community Services Division |
| New for CPA 2006 | Value for Money in Sport and Leisure (subsidy per visit) | To ensure value for money in the provision of Sport and Leisure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Quality Services Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 ‘To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough’ | Culture & Community Services Division |
| New for CPA 2006 | Value for Money in Sport and Leisure (visits per square metre) | To ensure value for money in the provision of Sport and Leisure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Quality Services Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 ‘To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough’ | Culture & Community Services Division |

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|------------------|--|--|--|--|
| New for CPA 2006 | % of population within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas by walk) of a range of three different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard | To provide choice and opportunity for residents within the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Quality Services Matters) ▪ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (Service Assessment Framework – Culture) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| PLSS1 | Proportion of households living within specified distance of a static library | To provide choice and opportunity for residents within the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Libraries, Archives and Adult Learning |
| PLSS2 | Aggregate scheduled opening hours per 1,000 population for all libraries | | | |
| PLSS3 | % of static libraries (as defined by CIPFA) providing access to electronic information resources connected to the internet | | | |

Cultural Strategy Performance Indicators

| PI | Description | Rationale | Linkages with Strategic Documents | Source |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| PLSS4 | Total number of electronic workstations with access to internet & libraries catalogue to users per 10,000 population | To provide choice and opportunity for residents within the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan (Learning Matters) ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Libraries Archives and Adult Learning |
| PLSS5 | % or requests for books met within 7, 15 and 30 days | | | |
| PLSS6 | Number of Library visits per 1,000 population | | | |
| Council Action Plan | Number of clubs with Sports Club accreditation | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council Action Plan ▪ Cultural Strategic Aim 8.1 'To increase access to and participation in cultural activity' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.2 'To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices available in the Borough' ▪ Cultural Strategy Strategic Aim 8.3 'To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities' | Culture & Community Services Division |
| | Number of Friends of Groups attending training sessions | | | |
| | Number of volunteering hours at Nature Reserves | | | |
| | Number of Leisure Options Card Holders | | | |
| | Provision of Multi Use Games Areas | | | |
| | Provision of skate/wheeled facilities in 5 Area Committees | | | |
| | Number of structured coaching courses at Leisure Centres | | | |
| | Number of structured coaching courses delivered in Parks | | | |
| | Number of adults that are referred by GP's for exercise programmes (increase of 20% over 05/06 numbers) | | | |
| | Number of participants in Summer 'Steps to Health' programme | | | |
| Number of sites signed up in Park Watch and Nature Reserve Watch | | | | |

14.0 Outcomes

| Strategic Aim 1: To increase access to and participation in Cultural Activity | |
|--|---|
| Objective | Impact |
| <p>To take action to address barriers to participation in order to enhance equality of access</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The provision of sport and physical activity in a range of community settings has increased opportunity of access for all ▪ The provision of Multiuse games areas in 25% of wards has been achieved by March 2007 ▪ The provision of Skate Parks in each township area has been achieved by March 2009 ▪ 100% of the Borough's Council facilities are now supported by User Forums resulting in increased levels of engagement with service users ▪ People with a disability have benefited from improved access through the completion of DDA priority 1 improvements at the Borough's Leisure Centres ▪ Race Equality review action plans delivered ▪ Public consultation undertaken on all of the Council's Cultural Services biennially ▪ A preferential pricing policy for low participant/target groups has been implemented leading to greater participation from under represented groups ▪ Encouraging access and promoting choice of cultural activities by providing 50% of publicity materials in the most commonly spoken community languages in the Borough |
| <p>To support the delivery of 'Every Child Matters' outcomes through Cultural Services</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The delivery of the Active Dudley project has enhanced children and young peoples physical and mental well being through pre-school/training to all nursery units within the Borough by March 2009 ▪ The Sportlink Programme has been delivered to 75% of schools by March 2009 ▪ Sports specific development programme delivered for target sports ▪ The implementation of the GP referral scheme for Children and Young People has been implemented by March 2008 ▪ The provision of free sports sessions through the community sports coaching scheme/gymnastics programme/holiday courses initiatives has been made available to looked after children ▪ 50% of sports clubs have achieved Clubmark accreditation by March 2008 ▪ Model for community use of school sports and arts facilities has been rolled out Borough wide by March 2007 ▪ 100% of the Council's and its partner agencies and voluntary sector organisations are operating in accordance with Dudley MBC Child Protection Policy by March 2009 |

Strategic Aim 1: To increase access to and participation in Cultural Activity

| Objective | Impact |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of services for children by the Libraries Service. Successful activities with high outcomes satisfaction rates ▪ Safe environments to pursue cultural activities through the provision of 'Learn to Swim' programmes and the adoption of new cycling proficiency standard is now available to children and young people |
| <p>To maximise opportunities for lifelong learning within the wider community</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The provision of first rung learning support is available through Libraries and Neighbourhood Learning Centres as centres of lifelong learning within local communities ▪ Numbers attending homework clubs increased, book issues increased, and use of public access computers increased ▪ Increased participation in learning from targeted groups ▪ The provision of outreach services for glass and geology and the establishment of a tour guide service at Red House Cone and Broadfield House has increased the number of people participating in Museum Services ▪ Museum websites provide online access to collections database by March 2009 |
| <p>To improve peoples health, well being and quality of life through participation in cultural activities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in sport and physical activity has increased by 3% by March 2009 from a baseline figure for March/April 2006 ▪ The GP exercise referral scheme has been expanded in partnership with PCT ▪ Availability of a programme of small scale theatre productions developed in partnership with Black Country Touring ▪ Number of people and range of events offered by the Borough's Halls has increased ▪ There has been an increase in participation levels for Dudley Borough Trail year on year ▪ Availability of a series of outdoor events for parks and green spaces ▪ Green Gym project delivered on green spaces throughout the Borough ▪ The number of leisure centres members has increased by 10% in 2007 from a baseline figure for March/April 2006 ▪ The number of visitors to leisure centres has increased by 1% per annum ▪ The number of swims per annum at the four major centres with pools has increased by 5% by March 2007 from a baseline figure for March/April 2006 |
| <p>To utilise cultural activities to deliver improvements in Community Safety</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of physical activity opportunities as diversionary activities through the PRU ▪ All Liveability physical improvements have been developed in accordance with Safer by Design guidelines |

| Strategic Aim 2: To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices in the Borough | |
|---|--|
| Objective | Impact |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Park Watch has been established across all Liveability Parks and Reserve Watch has been extended on the Borough's Nature Reserves ▪ Increase in use of Community information database and stock in libraries |
| To maintain and enhance the quality of cultural provision within the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 80% of unique and nationally important glass and geology records have been transferred to the CALM database by October 2007 ▪ QUEST has been achieved by all the Borough's major Leisure Centres by July 2007 ▪ The Stuart Crystal Collection has been developed and catalogued by October 2007 ▪ Long term strategy for the geological and fine art collections and the Brooke Robinson Museum developed by March 2009 ▪ Long term future of location of Archive Service to be determined by December 2007 ▪ The range of archive material available electronically has been increased ▪ The Green Flag rating for parks has been improved through the Liveability Project by March 2008 with one park attaining a Green Flag award ▪ Collections for rudbeckia and ceanothus maintained by the Council continue to be of national importance ▪ By March 2008 the principals of Towards an Excellent Service (TAES) have been applied throughout Cultural Services delivered by the Council |
| To protect and develop the industrial and natural heritage of the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International recognition obtained by achieving Geopark status for the Black Country ▪ Canals in Dudley developed and now promoted as a major tourist attraction ▪ Phase 1 of the Leasowes Grade 1 listed historic landscape completed by December 2007 ▪ Green Space Strategy which is PPG17 compliant has been developed for the Borough ▪ Maintained 100% rating of favourable/recovering status for Sites of Special Scientific Interest ▪ Seven Sisters mines have been stabilised and Wren's Nest NNR is accessible for many more people |
| To develop and sustain partnerships with all relevant agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to enhance cultural provision in the area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural Theme group of the Local Strategic Partnership established ▪ Initiatives supporting the Advancing Tourism in the Black Country have been delivered ▪ Playing Pitch Strategy recommendations fully implemented by March 2009 ▪ Black Country Sports Partnership 3 year plan has been delivered by December 2009 |
| To support and sustain diversity of cultural provision in the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity of activities retained by the availability and use of Council resources ▪ Cultural voluntary sector is actively supported in part by the Council |

| Strategic Aim 3: To stimulate the Economic and Social Regeneration within communities | |
|---|--|
| Objective | Impact |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perception of Cultural Services within the Borough has improved with a rise in the Community Panel's ranking ▪ Representation by Council on sub regional and regional agencies ▪ Remodelling of the Library Service completed |
| To stimulate the social regeneration of local communities and build capacity within them | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable Friends Network has been established through the Liveability Local Involvement Programme by September 2007 ▪ Local unemployed people have been trained by Future Skills Dudley in horticulture, landscaping, fencing and general construction ▪ Implementation plan for remodelling Library Service was completed by September 2007 ▪ Regional Puissance Project in partnership with Staffordshire Local Authority and Walsall MBC has been delivered |
| To enhance and support the Borough's image and economy through promoting its cultural activity locally, regionally and nationally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Black Country Tourism Study has been produced (2007/08) ▪ Himley Hall and Park has been developed into a major venue for events & cultural activities ▪ The image of the Borough has been greatly promoted through International Glass Festival (which happens every 2 years) ▪ Unified Marketing Plan for Cultural Services implemented |
| To promote social inclusion and cohesion through participation in cultural activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Black and Ethnic Minority community are engaged through Dudley Performing Arts targeted projects, e.g. African Drumming Schools ▪ Accreditation has been obtained through Sporting Equals by March 2007 ▪ Outdoor events in priority areas of the Borough are staged for young people ▪ High satisfaction levels for Housebound Library Service users maintained |
| To support the development and sustainability of the creative industries within the Borough | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of hot glass studios at both Broadfield House and Red House Glass Cone ▪ Netherton Arts Centre has been developed as an exhibition space and centre for arts education |
| To ensure cultural issues are at the core of local development frameworks, local planning functions and regeneration opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brierley Hill Area Action Plan and Stourbridge Area Action Plan has been adopted ▪ Events programme for town centres has been launched ▪ Townscape Heritage Initiative 5 Year Grant scheme has commenced ▪ Conservation character appraisal has been completed for Stourbridge Town Centre ▪ Castle Hill has been developed as a World Class Heritage Attraction ▪ Approval gained for Leisure Centres investment plan by March 2009 |

15.0 Appendices

15.1 Achievements

Strategic Aim 1: To increase access to and participation in cultural activity

- Cultural Services are aligned with and responding to the needs and ambitions of local people with well developed networks to identify community needs and aspirations
- Partnerships involving the Council, schools and the Primary Care Trust have led to the creation of the Physical Activities Task Group (PATG) which has led to some operational mapping, inter-agency working and interdependent service delivery
- Access to and participation in the following programmes/initiatives have helped promote healthy living within the Borough;
 - Steps to Health is aimed at improving health and access to leisure for people referred through their General Practitioner (GP),
 - Through the Active Dudley Programme, Culture and Community Services Division has been awarded a grant of £290,000 to establish a 3 year programme to engage young people in physical activity. This involves pupils walking and cycling to school and a daily programme of physical activity for 3 year olds and their families
 - The Me2 scheme is in place to ensure inclusive leisure facilities for disabled young people
 - Other initiatives include Active Playgrounds and Busy Kids, Sportlink, Specialist Sports Colleges, School Sport Coordinator Programme, PCT Obesity Strategy Group, and Disability Sportszone
- Options+ and Leisure Card benefits extended to carers, looked after children and disabled groups
- Development of a pilot project using Smartcards involving Dudley Libraries, Neighbourhood Learning Centres, and Leisure Centres
- The development of Child Protection in Sport Policy which has now been adopted by the four Black Country Boroughs and has been endorsed by NSPCC and Sport England as national good practice
- Over £100,000 secured from English Nature through the Wildspace and Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund grant schemes to improve nature reserves, promote public use of them and provide interpretation
- Development of Young Persons and Family programmes at all museum venues and across wide cultural subjects with associated outreach work
- VE day and VJ initiatives with Dudley Museums Service working in partnership with the Imperial War Museum with exhibitions travelling around the Borough and a major events programme and exhibition in Merry Hill to access audiences that may not visit a library archive or museum routinely as a cultural experience
- Development of Museum's Outreach Services for geology alongside the creation of a new geology gallery
- 2006 celebrations surrounding the Wrens Nest 50th Anniversary as the UK's first ever Geological and Mining features designated National Nature Reserve – English Nature's highest category
- Designation of the Limestone mining heritage of Wrens Nest and Castle Hill as a Scheduled Ancient Monument – English Heritage's highest category of site

- Museum Services and Regeneration Team (tourism development) contributions to the Black Country Study in particular the development of a Black Country Geopark and associated Black Country wide cultural linkages and events initiatives majoring on this area as a globally unique cultural sub region
- Community Safety Positive Activities for Young People programme
- Implementation of Skate/Wheels Strategy
- Provision of a further five Multiuse Games Areas
- Major programme of instrument tuition and celebratory events through Dudley Performing Arts
- Building improvements to meet Disability Discrimination Act 1995 together with significant refurbishment work including Dudley Leisure Centre, Dudley Library, Dudley Concert Hall and Lye, Netherton, Halesowen and Brierley Hill libraries
- Historic Environment Section promotion and outreach programme to schools, colleges, local societies and the general public
- Library promotion and outreach work to promote reading including activities and reading groups for adults and children, a summer reading scheme to encourage children to read through the holiday.
- The provision of books to support Adult Literacy and English as an additional language
- Provision of a Housebound Library Service
- Provision of 150 public access computers in libraries to enable access to online cultural content, and the training of all library staff to ECDL standard to be able to support customers in the use of technology
- Provision of materials in a wide range of formats including the printed word, audio tape, CD's (both word and music), video's and DVD's
- Majority of visits to the Broadfield House web site are from the USA

Strategic Aim 2: To improve the quality and extend the range of cultural choices in the Borough

- Progress has been made by the Council on the future strategy for Leisure provision in the Borough. These decisions have already released resources for investment at a number of Leisure Centre sites across the Borough
- Cultural Service plans are clearly rooted in the Council Plan and the Cultural Services contribution to Council priorities and aspirations is clear
- Progress has been made to embed a performance management framework within the Council and this will continue with the deployment of Performance Plus (performance management software) which supports the reviewing and monitoring of outcomes and highlights impact measures
- 100% score against the Government's PSA has been achieved for the Borough's Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- An external funding strategy to target the shared priorities is demonstrating improvements in service delivery including securing funding from Advantage West Midlands, the Big Lottery Fund PE and School Sport, Heritage Lottery, Museum, Library and Archives (West Midlands) and the Department for Communities and Local Government Liveability Fund.
Successes include £4million from English Partnerships for the stabilisation of the Seven Sisters limestone mine complex at Wrens Nest in such a way as to enable its future use as a major tourism/ visitor economy attraction for the Borough's geotourism
- Improved digital access to the Geological, Art and Glass Collections and Archive records via the internet and development of new catalogue software

- Development of the Red House Glass Cone as a visitor attraction, preserving one of only four surviving glass cones in the country, to celebrate the national and international importance of the Borough's glass heritage
- A variety of local history groups publish articles and information and hold regular talks and shows celebrating the history and developments of the Black Country, Dudley and its many villages
- Broadfield House Glass Museum, Red House Glass Cone and Dudley Museum & Art Gallery all recognised by the English Tourism Council as Quality Assessed Attractions through the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme. (VAQAS)
- Increased Cultural Services activity which reflects the ethnicity of the Borough's BME communities include;
 - The Lye Asian Women's Support Group which host an Asian women's awards ceremony at Ghausia Mosque and Community Centre and the International Women's Day in Lye is an annual multicultural event
 - Local community groups delivering a series of celebratory activities including Black History Month
 - Dudley Muslim Forum host a range of events to engage and network different communities to address the issues of cultural conflict and celebrate the success of people in the local Muslim community
 - Dudley Advice Centre hosted Dudley's inaugural 'Emancipation from Slavery Day', reflecting upon raising awareness of the African Holocaust in which over 100 million lives were lost
 - Other activities include the Caribbean Festival Group and Yemini Coach Education
 - Range of stock including DVD's and CD's available in Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Gujarati, and a range of European languages available in libraries

Strategic Aim 3: To stimulate the economic and social regeneration within communities

- Capacity building in local communities, particularly in Public Parks and Nature Reserves and the support and development of a network of 27 Friends of the Park Groups is showing strong progress and is having an impact on Community Safety:
 - £2.1 million secured for parks and regeneration to be invested through Liveability
 - £370,000 investment for parks usage determined by the local community through the Transforming Your Space initiative
 - Groundforce Parks pilot to provide training and improvement programme for local people
- £3 million Advantage West Midlands funding secured to develop a major new build Regeneration Centre in Netherton, whilst also refurbishing and reusing historic civic buildings alongside
- Designation of a new Dudley Town Centre Conservation Area and submission of a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a £1.95 million "Townscape Heritage Initiative" to be focused upon historic building repairs and refurbishment within the town centre
- External funding has been received for the major restoration of The Leasowes historic park
- Environmental Task Force established

- Integration of 'Better by Design' principles in park landscape and design
- Continued developments of entertainment programmes at town centre venues to support the night time economy
- Success of inaugural International Festival of Glass which attracted an extra 7,000 visitors to the area
- Adoption of the Black Country Visitor Economy Strategy and the implementation of the first year action plan for Dudley Borough
- Provision of learndirect centres in libraries to provide training for the public and small businesses in the use and application of ICT
- Provision of libraries across the Borough with information, including a wide range of community information leaflets, and staff to support local people in accessing information or material to support professional, learning or leisure needs
- Provision of an Archive Service to collect and maintain access to the written history of the Borough to maintain a sense of identity and place which supports future development
- Provision of 3 museum venues and secure storage to care for the Borough's key historic collections and artefacts and their interpretation and enhancement for the future, supporting educational professionals and the visitor economy
- Provision of a Historic Environment Section within the Planning and Development Service that exists to "Understand and explain, sustainably conserve and physically enhance the locally distinctive historic environment of Dudley"

15.2 SWOT Analysis

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global Uniqueness of key heritage assets ▪ Industrial Heritage (including Glass Heritage) ▪ Natural Heritage (including both geodiversity and biodiversity) ▪ Strong local identity ▪ Strong local communities ▪ Extensive amateur cultural communities ▪ Strong Partnership activities ▪ Expertise (national and international reputation of key specialist staff) ▪ Success in bidding for external funding ▪ Strong retailing centre ▪ Cultural Services a key stakeholder in Local Strategic Partnership ▪ Cultural Services demonstrating good value for money ▪ Community Strategy Theme ▪ Using innovative ways for service delivery ▪ Good Borough wide physical infrastructure linking cultural 'clusters' like Castle Hill and Wrens Nest | <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited number of built facilities ▪ Low level of aspiration ▪ Run down facilities in need of investment ▪ Current structure does not support working together ▪ Branding/perceived image of Dudley/Black Country ▪ Capacity to deliver new initiatives ▪ Over reliance on external funding to make things happen ▪ Poor road network and accessibility ▪ Variation in quality of user experience ▪ Lack of prioritisation |
| <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chance to make Dudley a key global visitor destination through investment in world class ideas and attraction 'clusters' ▪ Proximity to major cultural venues ▪ Legacy of canal's as a huge asset ▪ Wren's Nest/Castle Hill a "beacon" Black Country site ▪ International recognition Geopark designation and Black Country side cooperation on festivals and marketing ▪ Visitor Economy for Dudley ▪ Celebrate what we do locally ▪ Partnership working ▪ New funding opportunities ▪ Children's Bill 2004 ▪ Cross directorate working ▪ Master Plans for four strategic town centres in the Borough ▪ Midland Metro ▪ Recognition of role of Cultural Services as key driver for regeneration ▪ Engaging hard to reach communities ▪ Implementation of Leisure Centre Strategy ▪ Develop services further to achieve equality and diversity standards | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Areas of acute deprivation ▪ High resistance to change ▪ Competition ▪ Increasingly litigious society ▪ Short term funding and sustainability ▪ No structural funds after 2006 ▪ Council not explicit regarding Cultural Services priorities ▪ DDA issues ▪ Lack of ownership of Cultural Services across the Council ▪ Inappropriate development at key sites |

15.3 Glossary

| Acronym | Term |
|----------|--|
| ABI | Annual Business Inquiry |
| ASA | Amateur Swimming Association |
| ASHE | Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings |
| AWM | Advantage West Midlands |
| BARS | Buildings at Risk Register |
| BCAP | Black Country Arts Partnership |
| BCC | Black Country Consortium |
| BCSP | Black Country Sports Partnership |
| BCT | Black Country Tourism |
| BEA | Biodiversity Enhancement Area |
| BHRP | Brierley Hill Regeneration Partnership |
| BTCV | British Trust for Conservation Volunteers |
| BVPI | Best Value Performance Indicator |
| BME | Black and Minority Ethnic |
| CABE | Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment |
| CLOA | Culture and Leisure Officers Association |
| CSLA | Community Sports Leaders Award |
| DAC | Dudley Arts Council |
| DAP | Dudley Action Plan |
| DACHS | Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services |
| DCDC | Dudley Community Dance Consortium |
| DCMS | Department for Culture Media and Sport |
| DCVS | Dudley Council for Voluntary Service |
| DDA | Disability Discrimination Act 1995 |
| DfES | Department for Education and Skills |
| DM&AG | Dudley Museum and Art Gallery |
| DMBC | Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council |
| ERDF | European Regional Development Fund |
| FSD | Future Skills Dudley |
| GOWM | Government Office for the West Midlands |
| HER | Historic Environment Record |
| HET | Heart of England Tourism |
| IMD | Index of Multiple Deprivation |
| IPAQ | International Physical Activity Questionnaire |
| LNR | Local Nature Reserve |
| LSC | Learning and Skills Council |
| LSP | Local Strategic Partnership |
| MLA | Museums, Libraries and Archives |
| MLA (WM) | The regional council for museums, libraries and archives |
| NOF | New Opportunities Fund |
| NSPCC | National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children |
| PATG | Physical Activities Task Group |
| PAYP | Physical Activities for Young People |
| PCT | Primary Care Trust |
| PE | Physical Education |
| PESSCL | PE, School Sport and Club Links Strategy |

| Acronym | Term |
|----------------|--|
| PETS | Pathways to Employment Through Sport |
| PLSS | Public Library Service Standards |
| PLUS | Public Library User Survey |
| PPG | Planning Policy Guidance |
| PRU | Pupil Referral Unit |
| PSA | Public Service Agreement |
| REDOG | Regional Economic Development Officers Group |
| RMET | Ruskin Mill Educational Trust |
| RSB | Regional Sports Board |
| RSS | Regional Spatial Strategy |
| RTDOG | Regional Tourism Development Officers Group |
| SOA | Super Output Area |
| SSSI | Sites of Special Scientific Interest |
| TAES | Towards an Excellent Service |
| THI | Townscape Heritage Initiative |
| TWM | Tourism West Midlands |
| UCE | University of Central England |
| VAN | Visual Artists Network |
| VAQAS | Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme |
| WMLGA | West Midlands Local Government Association |
| WMRA | West Midlands Regional Assembly |
| WNNR | Wrens Nest National Nature Reserve |

15.4 Key Partnerships and Agencies influencing Cultural Strategy Implementation

| Agencies | | | Partnerships |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Local</i> | <i>Sub regional</i> | <i>Regional/National</i> | <i>Strategic Partnerships</i> |
| Broadfield House | Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust | Advantage West Midlands | Black Country Arts Consortium |
| Dudley Arts Council | Black Country Arts Partnership (BCAP) | Arts Council England | Black Country Sports Partnership |
| Dudley Canal Trust | Black Country Chamber of Commerce | Arts Council England, West Midlands | Black Country Study Culture Grp |
| DCVS | Black Country Archives | Birmingham & Black Country Biodiversity Steering Group | Culture West Midlands |
| Dudley Performing Arts | Black Country Business Link | BTCV West Midlands | Dudley Community Partnership |
| Dudley Public Health Department | Black Country Consortium | British Waterways | Dudley Learning Partnership |
| Dudley Racial Equality Council | Black Country Geological Society | CABE | Economic Development & Regeneration Partnership |
| Dudley PCT | Black Country Historical Society | Centro | Environmental Task Force |
| Friends of Parks and Nature Reserves | Black Country Libraries in Partnership | English Heritage | Health Officers Group |
| PE and School Sport Service | Black Country LSC | English Nature | Health & Well being Partnership |
| Pensnett Wildlife Group | Black Country Tourism | GOWM | Historic Environment Forum |
| Residents Associations | Federation of Small Businesses | Greenspace | Regional Biodiversity Partnership |
| Sport Dudley | Groundwork Black Country | Heart of England Tourism | Regional Environment Group |
| School Sports Association | | MLA West Midlands | REDOG |
| | | Natural England | RTDOG |
| | | Ruskin Glass Centre | Regional Health Partnership |
| | | Society of Chief Librarians | Safe & Sound Partnership |
| | | Sport England West Midlands | School Sport Partnerships |
| | | WM CLOA | Social Inclusion Partnership |
| | | WMLGA | Tourism West Midlands |
| | | WM Public Health Observatory | Urban Renaissance Group |
| | | WM Regional Museums Council | WM Parks Forum |
| | | WMRA | WM Sports Board |

15.5 Cultural Strategy Strategic Perspective

