

# Agenda

## Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Tuesday 3 June 2025**

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Time: **10.00 am**

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Place: **Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough  
Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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Notes: Please note the time, date and venue of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

**Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd, Democratic Services Officer**

Tel: 01432 260239

Email: [Henry.Merricks-Murgatroyd@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Henry.Merricks-Murgatroyd@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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# **Agenda for the Meeting of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

## **Membership**

<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Councillor Ed O'Driscoll</b>
<b>Vice-Chairperson</b>	<b>Councillor Frank Cornthwaite</b>

**Councillor Bruce Baker**  
**Councillor Elizabeth Foxton**  
**Councillor Rob Owens**  
**Councillor Roger Phillips**  
**Councillor Diana Toynbee**

## Agenda

	Pages
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
<b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES</b> To receive details of any councillor nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.	
<b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	
<b>4. MINUTES</b> To receive the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 March 2025.  <b>HOW TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS</b> The deadline for the submission of questions for this meeting is 5.00 pm on Wednesday 28 May 2025.  Questions must be submitted to <a href="mailto:councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk">councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk</a> . Questions sent to any other address may not be accepted.  Accepted questions and the responses will be published as a supplement to the agenda papers prior to the meeting. Further information and guidance is available at <a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved</a>	13 - 20
<b>5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b> To receive any written questions from members of the public.	
<b>6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</b> To receive any written questions from members of the council.	
<b>7. CULTURAL STRATEGY 2019-29</b> To provide an overview of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-29, and to seek the views of the scrutiny committee on how priorities are being progressed.	21 - 134
<b>8. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN</b> To provide scrutiny the opportunity to review the draft Local Transport Plan.	To Follow
<b>9. WORK PROGRAMME 2025-26</b> To consider the draft work programme for the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee until September 2025.	135 - 156
<b>10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</b> The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 8 July 2025, 14:00 pm.	





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- Attend all council, cabinet, committee and sub-committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.
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- Inspect minutes of the council and all committees and sub-committees and written statements of decisions taken by the cabinet or individual cabinet members for up to six years following a meeting.
- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting (a list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title. The council's constitution is available at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution)
- Access to this summary of your rights as members of the public to attend meetings of the council, cabinet, committees and sub-committees and to inspect documents.

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## **The seven principles of public life**

### **(Nolan Principles)**

#### **1. Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **2. Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **3. Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **4. Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **5. Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **6. Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **7. Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.





## Guide to Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny is a statutory role fulfilled by councillors who are not members of the cabinet.

The role of the scrutiny committees is to help develop policy, to carry out reviews of council and other local services, and to hold decision makers to account for their actions and decisions.

Council has decided that there will be five scrutiny committees. The committees reflect the balance of political groups on the council.

The Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee consists of 7 councillors.

Councillor	Party
Bruce Baker	Conservative Party
Frank Cornthwaite (Vice-Chairperson)	Conservative Party
Elizabeth Foxton	Independents for Herefordshire
Ed O'Driscoll (Chairperson)	Liberal Democrats
Rob Owens	Liberal Democrats
Roger Phillips	Conservative Party
Diana Toynbee	The Green Party

### Scrutiny functions

The committees have the power:

- (a) to review, influence policy or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive,
- (b) to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive,
- (c) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive,
- (d) to make reports or recommendations to council or the cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive,
- (e) to make reports or recommendations to council or the cabinet on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area
- (f) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions and to make reports or recommendations to the council with respect to the discharge of those functions. In this regard crime and disorder functions means:
  - (i) a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and

- (ii) a strategy for combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area; and
  - (iii) a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area
- (g) to review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in its area and make reports and recommendations to a responsible person on any matter it has reviewed or scrutinised or to be consulted by a relevant NHS body or health service provider in accordance with the Regulations (2013/218) as amended. In this regard *health service* includes services designed to secure improvement -
- (i) in the physical and mental health of the people of England, and
  - (ii) in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental illness
  - (iii) and any services provided in pursuance of arrangements under section 75 in relation to the exercise of health-related functions of a local authority.
- (h) to review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area.
- (i) To track actions and undertake an annual effectiveness review

#### **The remit of Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

- Talk Business programme, advice and support
- Development investment plans - town, market town, rural, Hereford City
- Hereford Enterprise Zone
- Higher education development
- Adult and community learning programme
- Apprenticeships
- Fastershire programme
- Digital connectivity
- Heritage, culture and tourism
- Social value procurement policy
- Planning
- Licensing
- Regulatory
- Capital highway maintenance, asset management and infrastructure repair
- Council housing
- Statutory community safety and policing scrutiny powers

### **Who attends scrutiny committee meetings?**

- Members of the committee, including the chairperson and vice-chairperson.
- Cabinet members, they are not members of the committee but attend principally to answer any questions the committee may have and inform the debate.
- Officers of the council to present reports and give technical advice to the committee.
- People external to the council invited to provide information to the committee.
- Other councillors can attend but can only speak at the discretion of the chairperson.





## **Minutes of the meeting of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee held in Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Wednesday 12 March 2025 at 10.00 am**

**Committee members present in person and voting:**      **Councillors: Frank Cornthwaite (Vice-Chairperson), Dave Davies, Elizabeth Foxton, Robert Highfield, Ed O'Driscoll (Chairperson), Rob Owens and Diana Toynbee**

Others in attendance:

E Bradford	Head of Highways and Traffic	Herefordshire Council
B Durkin	Cabinet Member Roads and Regulatory Services	Herefordshire Council
B Evans	Engineering Manager	Herefordshire Council
H Merricks-Murgatroyd	Democratic Services Officer	Herefordshire Council
A Rees-Glinos	Democratic Services Support Officer	Herefordshire Council
S Tompkins	Delivery Director - Infrastructure	Herefordshire Council
D Webb	Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Herefordshire Council

### **41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Roger Phillips and Cllr Bruce Baker.

### **42. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Cllr Dave Davies was present as the named substitute for Cllr Roger Phillips, and Cllr Robert Highfield was present as the named substitute for Cllr Bruce Baker.

### **43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **44. MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were received.

**Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairperson.**

### **45. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Documents containing questions received from members of the public and the responses given, plus supplementary questions and their respective responses were published as a supplement to the published agenda and papers.

### **46. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

No questions had been received from councillors.

## **47. HIGHWAYS WINTER MAINTENANCE**

The committee considered a report on Highways Winter Maintenance.

The slides presented by the Head of Highways and Traffic are outlined below (in italics), with the principal points noted below.

A The Head of Highways and Traffic introduced the presentation and welcomed the opportunity to update the committee on Highways Winter Maintenance.

B The Head of Highways and Traffic presented:

### *Background*

b.1 Clarifications were provided around what resources are available and what fleet and equipment is available.

### *Current Fleet*

### *Routes, Salt and Decision Making*

b.2 The county is split into three domains – North, South-East and South-West – due to the diverse geography for decision-making purposes.

b.3 There are cross-boundary agreements with surrounding counties including Powys, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Monmouthshire. Treatment is carried on to a suitable point and equally they will stray over into Herefordshire to do likewise.

b.4 There are two depots – Thorn and Kingsland – where salt storage facilities exist.

b.5 A contract exists with Metdesk for a four-year period who draw on data from county weather stations.

b.6 Decisions are also recorded through Vaisala to ensure that treatment is suitably reflected.

### *Routes*

C The Engineering Manager presented:

### *Operations Model*

c.1 The various stages of operation were outlined. A forecast is received from Metdesk which helps to inform what the teams do.

c.2 There are three decision-makers who are on a rota. It is decided what the treatment should be, the time of it, and the spread of salt.

c.3 Once a decision has been made, the supervisors get the information out to the drivers, loaders, depots, and mobilises all of the teams to start treatment.

c.4 At the end, data is recorded through Vaisala to reflect the appropriate decision-making throughout.

### *Forecasting – Metdesk*

c.5 The forecasting carried out by Metdesk helps to inform the decisions made whether to treat the routes.

c.6 Monitoring is done 24/7 and the team monitors over night to ensure that there is no significant change in weather to help better inform treatment.

#### *24 Hour Summary*

#### *Salt Spread Rates*

#### *2-5 Day Summary*

c.7 The 2–5-day summary helps to provide a foresight on what is expected weather wise and when it will hit. It helps to provide the teams a bit more time to plan and prepare prior to potential treatment.

c.8 The 2-5 day summary also helps to prepare ahead to ensure that adequate resources are available for treatment.

#### *Site Graphs*

#### *Camera Wall*

c.9 It was clarified that there are seven weather stations, across the county, with cameras to enable better decision-making when it comes to treatment. At each of the stations, there are a number of sensors which get surface temperature, deep temperature, and air temperatures.

c.10 It was added that access is not limited only to Herefordshire, access is available to the A49 and other surrounding roads with National Highways. This is helpful to forecast what weather could be like in Herefordshire.

#### *Vaisala Manager*

c.11 It was noted that the council has a contract with Vaisala who manage the weather stations and ensure that they are correctly reading and recording and sending data correctly to Metdesk.

D The Head of Highways and Traffic presented:

#### *Masternaut – Tracking Data*

d.1 It was noted that each of the vehicles is fitted with Masternaut which track the vehicles in real time across the network and records what is going on at the time. This helps to ensure an audit record for claims and to understand better what is going on at the time.

d.2 The vehicles are limited to 30 mph while gritting to ensure that treatment is done correctly across the network.

#### *Dashcams – Email Alarm Facility*

d.3 Each of the gritters have dashcams fitted to enable better understanding of what the state of the network is.

d.4 The gritters also have an alarm facility to allow the driver to cut a segment of video out which emails that footage back to the supervisors.

The principal points of the subsequent discussion are summarised below:

1. The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation and thanked the team at Thorn Depot for making himself and fellow members welcome at their site visit.
2. The Delivery Director – Infrastructure praised the gritting rate of the network, adding that it is impressive in comparison to many other local authorities across the country.
3. The Chair noted that there had been a long period of time since there has been a review of the primary and secondary routes and there is a desire for a review to be undertaken.
4. In response to a question about how important officers think it is for a review of primary and secondary routes to be undertaken, the Head of Highways and Traffic commented it would be welcome, highlighting that it has been a long time since the network has been reviewed. It was noted that it would be a significant piece of work and would receive a range of different views as to what should and should not be gritted. It was added that the highways network does not fundamentally change significantly year-to-year, however, over a longer period of time there will be changes in terms of new developments and usage of the network.
5. In response to a question about engagement with town and parish councils around which routes need to be gritted, the Engineering Manager noted that the primary and secondary routes are mostly set. When it goes into footway treatments, then they are engaged with and a lengthsman is able to do some gritting themselves. The council does not generally consult on day-to-day activity as the route treatments with the gritters are mostly set. Calls for grit bins, additional salting, additional areas are considered as part of the programme.
6. In response to a question about a mechanism for getting feedback from town and parish councils, the Head of Highways and Traffic noted that there it isn't given the length of time since it was last reviewed. With a review of the routes, consultation would take place.
7. In response to a question about the policy on grit bins, the Engineering Manager confirmed that the council has a list of grit bins that are present around the county. With the Community Commissioning Model, parishes are allowed to purchase grit bins and put them onto the network and it is their responsibility to maintain them. The bins that the council own are managed and maintained by the council.
8. The Head of Highways and Traffic stated that approximately 5,000 grit bins are distributed throughout the council's network, strategically placed in areas deemed essential. When asked about the division of responsibility between the council and the parish council for filling these 5,000 grit bins, the Head of Highways and Traffic responded that he could obtain those specific details.
9. In response to a question about data from the last review and whether it could be compared to today's data, the Engineering Manager confirmed that the service has evolved since the last review and historical data is not available. However, the data that is available today is much more extensive and can be used.

10. The Cabinet Member Roads and Regulatory Services added that current efforts are built upon foundations laid in previous years, with incremental improvements made annually. He added that he would welcome a review of the routes.
11. In response to a question about whether the council has a plan to replace grit bins once they have become damaged, the Engineering Manager noted that the council is reliant on locals to inspect and identify bins that need repair/replacement.
12. In response to a question about the resilience and resourcing of the two-team system, the Head of Highways and Traffic underlined that there are the 15 primary routes which the two teams will look after and are on call during the day and during the night on alternate weeks through the season. Potential concerns that exist around the requirements on the teams can be fed back. As part of the next contract, providers will be asked to come up with their own plans on effective resourcing.
13. When asked if specific rat runs receive priority, the Head of Highways and Traffic pointed to paragraph 14 of the report, which references commuter routes. It was indicated that a review could identify potential adjustments to the network's usage, possibly designating these as gritting routes. However, implementing such changes would necessitate a substantial increase in resources.
14. The Chair noted that every time a route is gritted, the cost of one grit would be approximately £8,000. The detailed information from the weather service has meant that already over the last few months, on two occasions, the new information has meant that gritting was not required as the road surface temperature was being properly measured and it could be accurately predicted what was required meaning a significant saving to the council. It was also noted that conversely the new information from the weather service can also advise the teams to go out when they previously did not go out. On those occasions, it could help to save lives.
15. The Head of Highways and Traffic responded that potential communications on the benefits of the weather service would be beneficial as it would help ensure people to understand the messages and exactly how things work. It was noted that there is sometimes a misconception around the service that Metdesk provide in terms of monitoring and on-call support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It was restated that Metdesk provide highly detailed information several times a day drawing from the weather station information that is available.
16. The Chair added that it would be useful to have some figures on exactly how many times that the teams have not gone out when they previously have done for the current season, as part of any comms.
17. The Cabinet Member for Roads and Regulatory Services emphasized that utilizing the weather service is both a cost-efficient and secure method for providing Winter maintenance services. He endorsed the suggestion to distribute additional information through communications to enhance public understanding of the weather service's advantages.
18. When asked if Metdesk's role extends beyond just alerting about freezing temperatures, the Engineering Manager explained that during Winter, Metdesk's service also informs the council about flooding, rain, winds, and other weather conditions. Additionally, numerous weather warnings are received from the Met Office, emergency services, and the resilience team, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation.

19. The Chair commented that currently, there are very detailed 24-hour forecasts from Metdesk and after talking to the team at Thorn Depot, they felt that it would be beneficial to increase that to 36 hours. A 36-hour forecast would help give more opportunity to get shift patterns right and prepare more in advance in terms of manpower.
20. The Engineering Manager explained that adopting a 36-hour forecasting model would enhance planning capabilities, allowing the team to better schedule rest periods and allocate time for treating footpaths. Efforts are currently underway, including securing necessary approvals, to implement this shift to 36-hour forecasting.

The Chairperson thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

There was a short adjournment to enable committee members to consider potential recommendations. The meeting recommenced and the following resolutions were agreed by the committee.

**Resolved:**

**That Herefordshire Council**

- 1. Review and update the primary and secondary routes on the gritting network.**
- 2. Undertake an audit of the number and location of local authority-owned grit bins.**
- 3. Carry out comprehensive publicity to demonstrate the value and effectiveness of the commissioned professional weather services resulting from accurate forecasting.**

**48. UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE CONNECTED COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer presented the update on recommendations made by the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee report.

The principal points of the subsequent discussion are summarised below:

1. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer presented a set of the recommendations that the committee made since July 2023. It was noted that work had begun to collate and share these recommendations since July 2024 where at that point there had been a change in staff members.
2. It was noted that there were two issues needed to be cleared up on: firstly, the understanding between the difference of actions and recommendations. Actions have therefore been kept away from recommendations. Secondly, it was ensured that a grip on responses to recommendations was made.
3. It was added that recommendations have properly been sent out to the relevant officers for response. It was noted that where the service had failed to comprehensively record that had been done.
4. As of July 2024, it was decided that recommendations lacking responses would be redistributed to officers for follow-up. All recommendations included in the

agenda papers have been forwarded to the officers, and the responses received so far are incorporated into those documents.

5. The Chair thanked the Democratic Services Officer for contributions to the process. It was noted that ensuring accountability and escalation is essential to obtain responses to recommendations. A suggestion was made to establish a procedure where officers are prompted for replies, and if no responses are forthcoming, the matter is escalated, with relevant officers, directors, and the committee Chair included in the communications sent to officers.
6. It was suggested that all scrutiny committees have a similar system for chasing after responses for recommendations.
7. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer responded that it would be helpful to consult the other scrutiny committees to enable the opportunity to pull together a more unified approach to the process on recommendations.
8. In response to a question about why a lot of financial details were left confidential and whether the council needs to provide clear justification as to why that information was left confidential, the Statutory Scrutiny Officer suggested that the portfolio holder is asked to account for that in the meeting and to ask whether they can provide any more detail as to why the commercial confidentiality requires them to disclose this information. Therefore, it was suggested that the questions are asked first before recommendations are made.

**Resolved:**

**That Herefordshire Council:**

1. **Ensures that the statutory scrutiny officer drafts a cross-scrutiny committee protocol, to ensure timely responses with faster escalation as required to outstanding recommendations.**

#### **49. WORK PROGRAMME 2024/5**

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer presented the draft work programme for the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

The committee unanimously agreed the draft work programme for Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee.

**Resolved that:**

**The committee agree the work programme for Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee contained in the work programme report attached as appendix 1.**

#### **50. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 3 June 2025, 10:00 am.

The meeting ended at 12.04 pm

**Chairperson**







# Title of report: Cultural Strategy 2019-29

**Meeting: Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Tuesday 3 June 2025**

**Report by: Culture and Leisure Lead**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

This report provides an overview of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-29, and to seek the views of the scrutiny committee on how priorities are being progressed.

## **Recommendation(s)**

That:

- a) That the committee notes this report; and
- b) The committee considers the role of Herefordshire Council in delivering the priorities of the Cultural Strategy 2019-29.

## **Alternative options**

1. The Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee has requested that this matter is considered, in order that the council can understand progress in delivering the Cultural Strategy 2019-29 and consider the role of the council in supporting the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (HCP) to deliver on key priorities. There are no alternative options.

## **Key considerations**

2. The Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-29 was developed by Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (HCP). It was informed by in-depth local consultation, a three-month online survey, an Arts Council England-funded consultancy, and research into national and international good practice.

3. HCP is an independent consortium of arts, culture and heritage organisations, local government and businesses formed in 2018 with a shared vision to celebrate and grow Herefordshire's creative and cultural sector (see Appendix 1: Herefordshire Cultural Partnership for more detail on formation, constitution, board membership and funding). HCP is formally recognised by Arts Council England as one of 40 'cultural compacts' nationally.
4. HCP receives no direct funding from Herefordshire Council. The organisation has received £20,000 from Arts Council England (2021-22), £14,800 from Arts Council England (2022-23), £9,000 from a UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) cultural grant award (2023-24) and £9,000 from a UKSPF cultural grant award (2024-25) to support the administration of the cultural compact.
5. Through Herefordshire Council's membership of the HCP and support for early projects such as Herefordshire's A Great Place (2018-21), the council had a central role in the development of the cultural strategy. The Culture and Leisure Lead and Museum and Art Gallery Lead are active Board Members.
6. The vision of the cultural strategy is: "For Herefordshire to be a culturally vibrant, prosperous and sought-after county in which to live, work and to visit. Hallmarks of the county will be its glorious landscape, its heritage and history, its diverse creative and cultural offer and its sense of ambition."
7. The cultural strategy has five priority objectives:
  - a. **A Great Place** - A resilient cultural infrastructure that makes Herefordshire a great place to live, work and to visit
  - b. **Children and Young People** - Listening to children and young people, and connecting them to culture and connectivity
  - c. **Cultural Economy** - Building and supporting vibrant creative enterprises
  - d. **Cultural Democracy** - The arts and culture are for everyone
  - e. **Cultural Tourism** - Raising Herefordshire's national and international profile.

(see Appendix 2: Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-29 for full strategy report)
8. The original priorities aligned with and supported the council's wider social, economic and cultural priorities as outlined in the Herefordshire County Plan 2020-2024.
9. Herefordshire Council endorsed the Cultural Strategy 2019-2029 on 15 October 2020 ([Decision - Endorsement of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-2029 - Herefordshire Council](#)). The core priority objectives have since directed the work of the council's cultural services, local arts organisations and strategic cultural development in the county.
10. The independence of HCP and the council's endorsement of the cultural strategy has allowed HCP to exploit large-scale cultural funding over the past five years to deliver significant county-wide arts projects (e.g. A Great Place 2018-21: £746,000; Our Place 2024-27: £730,000).
11. In 2025 HCP in partnership with Herefordshire Council decided to undertake a review of the cultural strategy at the mid-way point to ensure that the strategy still meets the needs of the creative and cultural sector in Herefordshire. The review would help to address any challenges the sector now faces, take advantage of new opportunities and put forward a renewed strategic approach to better support, grow and develop the sector. The review would allow HCP:
  - a. To reflect on and respond to external challenges that have faced the sector since 2019 such as COVID-19 and its lasting impact on the opportunities and earnings of cultural

organisations and practitioners, continuing constraints on council budgets, uncertainties about international trade in goods and services and the cost-of-living/ energy crisis.

- b. To better align with the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-28 and its priorities areas of People, Place, Transformation and Growth.
  - c. To draw on and complement the priorities of the new Destination Management Plan launched in 2025 by Herefordshire County BID.
  - d. To address the continuing uncertainty over the forthcoming Devolution settlement and potential for wider regional collaboration.
  - e. To account for changes in education funding and skills delivery.
  - f. To consider the changing needs of Herefordshire communities over the past five years.
  - g. To ensure full alignment to Arts Council England's Let's Create 2020-30 strategy and the recent consultation on Arts Council England's future role and funding capacity.
  - h. To take advantage of opportunities arising from measures and successes directed by the existing cultural strategy (e.g. significant development and £730,000 grant funding towards creative health programming, council success in securing £14 million in match funding for the new Museum and Library and Learning Centre, Hereford public art programme etc.)
  - i. To respond to research and data emerging from 'state of the sector' cultural reports commissioned by Herefordshire Council (see Appendix 3: Herefordshire Cultural Sector Review, August 2024).
12. Herefordshire Council assigned £10,000 UK Shared Prosperity funding to commission consultants The Fifth Sector Ltd to support HCP in making the necessary updates. The funding has supported consultation with Herefordshire arts organisations and sector leaders, public online sessions, workshops with regional cultural organisations, review sessions with Board members and the drafting of priority recommendations to incorporate in the new cultural strategy.
13. The review highlighted several successes delivered or achieved under each priority area (2019-2024). A selection is shown below:

#### **A Great Place**

- a. Herefordshire Cultural Partnership has been established as the lead cultural development body for the county. Considerable work has been undertaken to strengthen HCP governance including broadening board membership, developing a membership Terms of Reference, creation of an Equality Diversity Inclusion policy, and contracting financial management from Kinder Accountants. HCP is now recognised as one of 40 'cultural compacts' nationally by Arts Council England and an exemplar in a rural location.
- b. Major inward capital investment achieved for cultural assets through Stronger Hereford projects and Herefordshire Council match commitment (£14 million) to create a stronger and more resilient cultural infrastructure (e.g. Hereford Museum and Art Gallery, Shirehall Library and Learning Centre, StoryPoint Digital Hub, Powerhouse, Castle Green Pavilion etc.) and through the successful Heritage Action Zone scheme in Leominster.

- c. Stronger partnership working between Herefordshire Council and HCP on the delivery of coordinated county-wide projects, largescale funding bid applications to Arts Council England (e.g. Our Place creative health project 2024-27) and regional cultural development with key partners (e.g. neighbouring councils, West Midlands Combined Authority, Culture Central, Create Central and national arts organisations).
- d. Successful delivery of the Arts Council England / National Lottery Heritage Fund 'A Great Place' scheme (2018-21) which explored the power of culture and heritage to transform communities in Herefordshire. HCP administered 'go-and-see' bursaries, 'my place' cultural grants, workshops and training for practitioners, discovery labs for communities to try out creative activities and cultural apprenticeships to drive awareness, connectivity and growth in the sector.
- e. Successful partnership working between Herefordshire Council's planning and conservation team and cultural organisations on the delivery of the Public Art Programme 2024, and with the estates and markets team on the meanwhile use of land on Merton Meadow and High Town for cultural residencies and programming.
- f. Hereford Museum and Art Gallery has developed the 'Voices of the Wye' project celebrating local heritage, place and identity, 'Inside Out' which uses digital technology to bring hidden collections out of the store and will launch Museum on the Move taking heritage exhibits to rural areas in summer 2025.

### **Children and Young People**

- a. Development of a new Digital Skills Centre at Hereford College of Arts (HCA) and Skills Hub at NMITE (New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering) as part of the Stronger Hereford portfolio to cement Herefordshire as a leader for arts, design and engineering education and support children and young people to develop their talent.
- b. Creative Connections (Arts Connect) and Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) are an integral part of the cultural strategy priorities and reported on at HCP board meetings.
- c. Abigail Appleton, Principal at HCA, has been invited to a government task team to input into policy around creative education nationally.
- d. The successful development of Rural Media's Point of View programme offering a platform for young people to be heard and to develop digital skills.
- e. Delivery of several co-production projects with local schools and colleges (e.g. public art programme) supporting children and young people to experience art and culture and gain insight into careers in the creative and cultural industries.
- f. Hereford Museum and Art Gallery has been selected by the Natural History Museum as part of its Fixing our Broken Planet initiative encouraging youth-led co-production activity on climate change and empowering young residents to engage with urgent global themes through local culture.
- g. HCP members have worked collaboratively to bring in international artists and works to Herefordshire to inspire the next generation and bring the best performances and exhibitions to the county (e.g. Yinka Shonibare at Hereford Cathedral, NoFit State Circus residency, international blacksmithing artists as part of Ferrous etc.).

### **Cultural Economy**

- a. £1.25 million has been invested in the cultural sector as part of Herefordshire's UKSPF allocation between 2022-25. The UKSPF cultural programme covered a mix of grant schemes, sector studies, creative health projects and business advice designed to grow and develop the cultural sector in Herefordshire.
- b. From 2024-25 Mountain Perspective provided business consultancy advice and training to creative businesses to drive growth across Herefordshire's cultural sector. This included 70 one-to-one advice sessions, 12 group workshops and events, career advice sessions to final year students at HCA, and a Ladies Lunch network.
- c. Hereford Herd and Elevate 'business booster' networking events have been set up to support local people working in the creative industries.
- d. HCP and Herefordshire Council have worked closely with Herefordshire Business Board and Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber to map local creative businesses (members of the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber sit on the HCP Board). In 2024 Herefordshire Council commissioned a cultural sector study (see Appendix 3: Cultural Sector Report) to provide information on the resilience of the creative business base, the GVA of Herefordshire's cultural sector, and the make-up of the creative workforce to help inform local economic policy.
- e. Artlandish was founded as a pilot 'Empty Shops' project by Hereford Community Land Trust to host exhibitions, workspaces and activities across two venues in Hereford (Gomond St and Bloom:Space). The project received 3,823 visitors in the first 11 weeks of opening and has paved the way for more art on the high street initiatives.

### **Cultural Democracy**

- a. Development of The Shire website [The Shire | The Shire](#) as a destination for information about the cultural sector in Herefordshire and the HCP.
- b. The award of £730,000 (inclusive £596,000 Arts Council England funding) for HCP's Our Place creative health project (2024-27) exploring how embedding arts and cultural creativity in our most deprived communities can support ill-health prevention, improve health and wellbeing and boost pride in place and rural identity. The project also includes intergenerational initiatives, peer learning programmes on creative health and creative health trials to inform national policy.
- c. New cross-sector wellbeing projects have opened up cultural programming to new audiences across Herefordshire and shown the power of creativity to support social and health issues (e.g. Three Choirs Festival music sessions at The Living Room for veterans and those with lived experience of homelessness, 'Men in Motion' sessions developed by 2Faced Dance and Herefordshire Mind is a weekly movement programme for men living with a mental health condition).
- d. Herefordshire museums service was selected as one of only 11 pilot museums for the national 'The Sensational Museum Project'. This project ensures that local participants are involved in co-creation and testing in how Herefordshire museums service becomes more inclusive, ensuring community input is valued and equality of access and inclusivity are at the forefront of the council's museum offer.
- e. Several 'on-the-ground' community networking groups have been established to ensure cultural practitioners and community groups are able to connect (e.g. Herefordshire Visual Artists Network (HVAN)).

### **Cultural Tourism**

- a. Regular development sessions between HCP, Herefordshire Council and Herefordshire / Hereford BIDs have taken place to ensure the coordination of the cultural strategy and priorities with the development of Herefordshire tourism, the Destination Management Plan and county-wide marketing approaches.
  - b. Herefordshire Council commissioned an events and festivals study and tourism infrastructure resilience studies for Hereford and the market towns. Strategic recommendations and priorities informed updates to the new Destination Management Plan 2025-35.
  - c. Delivery of a strong programme of place-based events and festivals across the county that celebrate place, culture and identity (e.g. Ferrous, Applefest, Hay Festival, h-art etc.)
  - d. Reviewing and developing council-owned heritage assets (e.g. Old House through the Heritage Imagined project) improving the experience for visitors, making visits more engaging and increasing accessibility.
14. The process of updating the cultural strategy is ongoing and due to complete in early June 2025. The draft strategy and priorities will then be consulted on, tested and refined with Board members, cultural organisations and practitioners, sector leaders and Herefordshire Council from June-September 2025.
  15. Draft priorities establish the context of a 'Pro-Herefordshire Mindset' with priorities around Children and Young People, Creative Economy, Cultural Democracy, Cultural Tourism and a new priority area: Creative Health (see Appendix 4: Cultural Strategy 2025-29 Draft Priorities).
  16. Delivering the cultural strategy will rely on a collaborative approach from partners across different sectors. The document will include a new strategic action plan with measurable outcomes and identified roles and responsibilities of all partners in delivering the core priorities (developed and agreed in consultation).
  17. The expectation is that the updated cultural strategy is adopted by Herefordshire Council as the formal county cultural strategy.

## Community impact

18. Culture plays a critical role in why people choose to live, work or visit Herefordshire. It drives the county's local economy; leisure and tourism offer; supports health and wellbeing; helps to develop new skills and bolsters pride in place. It is at the very heart of all communities across Herefordshire.
19. Cultural programming often provides the key interface for engaging wider rural areas, connecting people to place, and brokering access to local services beyond a cultural remit.
20. The Cultural Strategy 2019-29 was developed through consultation with local organisations, communities and groups across Herefordshire to ensure that the unique needs of the county were being met through its core priorities. A core priority of the original strategy is Cultural Democracy, ensuring the arts and culture are for everyone and aligning it with Arts Council England's Let's Create strategy 2020-30.
21. At the time of the production of the culture strategy, the then Council Plan 2020-2024 stated that: "We want culture and creativity to be part of our residents' everyday lives, whether by engaging with our many fantastic exhibitions and events; supporting the health and wellbeing agenda by recognising the significant social value that can come from cultural services such as



libraries and arts; or by increasing inclusivity by providing all our residents with more opportunities to benefit from our varied cultural activities. We are committed to working with the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership to ensure that Herefordshire continues to build on our many strengths and successes.”

22. The new Herefordshire Council Plan 2024–28 states that, as part of the Council's place objectives, we will: “Support our local culture and heritage and make Herefordshire a thriving, safe and attractive place to live and visit”.

## Environmental Impact

23. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
24. The cultural strategy aligns well with the Council's [environmental policy commitments](#) particularly in terms of the commitment to: “Raise awareness of, mitigate against, and adapt to climate change impacts”, “Conserve the natural and historic environment of Herefordshire” and “Promote links between environmental sustainability, economic growth and wellbeing.”
25. New updates to the cultural strategy in 2025 will include a specific cross-cutting theme related to environmental sustainability, to acknowledge and reference the council's commitment to reach a thriving net zero-carbon and nature-rich Herefordshire by 2030.

## Equality duty

26. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that it is paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
27. The Cultural Strategy 2019-29 was an independent document prepared by Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and adhered to the organisation's own equality policies at the time of origination and reflected Herefordshire Council's Equality Policy and objectives.
28. The cultural strategy takes a positive view of equality with several examples included in the document. In the overview to the ‘What do we mean by culture?’ section on page 6, the strategy recognises ‘the need to increase participation and promote inclusion in cultural and creative activity’.
29. One of the main strands of the cultural strategy is ‘Cultural Democracy’, emphasising that the arts and culture are for everyone. One action listed is to ‘Address barriers to participation and improve access to arts and cultural experiences.’
30. ‘Inclusion and Diversity’ is one of the five cross-cutting themes of the cultural strategy as identified on page 26 of the document. This is used as the criteria for evaluating and developing projects by the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and across the wider county.
31. As this session considers high-level progress in the review and updating of the cultural strategy, and does not address the actual delivery of projects, it is not believed that it will have an impact on the council's equality duty at this stage. An equality impact assessment (EqIA)

will be carried out as part of cultural strategy development work, and the results shared with HCP.

### Resource implications

32. As a background report for the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee, there are no direct resource implications to this paper.
33. HCP does not receive any funding from Herefordshire Council. £10,000 UKSPF funding was provided specifically in 2024-25 for consultancy work to support updates to the cultural strategy.
34. Herefordshire Council resource is provided through the Culture and Leisure Lead and Museum and Art Gallery Lead roles.
35. Any future Herefordshire Council funding or resources to support the delivery of cultural strategy priorities would need to be considered separately.

### Legal implications

36. There are no legal implications with this report.

### Risk management

37. The risks associated with the delivery of the cultural strategy are being managed in line with the council's risk management strategy. Relevant risks will continue to be monitored and managed through appropriate governance routes to ensure they are identified, recorded, and escalated where necessary to support delivery of the strategy's priorities.
38. The following are the primary risks in delivering the Cultural Strategy 2019-29:

Risk/ opportunity	Mitigation
There is a low risk of reputational damage as the Cultural Strategy is currently owned by an independent cultural organisation and stakeholders and the public may expect this to be owned by the council.	<p>The ownership of strategic cultural development by an Arts Council England cultural compact such as HCP is typical nationally. Herefordshire Council does not have sufficient internal resource or capacity to lead on cultural development.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council endorsed the Cultural Strategy 2019-29 in October 2020 and has an active voice in the development of county cultural priorities through its membership on the HCP Board. The expectation is that Herefordshire Council adopts the updated cultural strategy in 2025 as its countywide strategy.</p> <p>HCP's independence from Herefordshire Council has opened up additional potential funding avenues for culture which would not have been</p>



	there should the Council have led on cultural development.
Local stakeholders may not agree with the priorities identified in the strategy.	<p>Stakeholders, cultural organisations, other sector leaders, local government representatives, practitioners and the public were invited to sessions to develop the original Cultural Strategy 2019-29.</p> <p>A similar process has guided the updates to the cultural strategy. The final draft strategy will be consulted on, tested and refined following additional consultation with key stakeholders, partner sectors and representatives from the cultural sector.</p>
Funding may not be available for Herefordshire Cultural Partnership. They are dependent on other sources of funding to continue their operation and delivery of core strategic priorities.	<p>HCP has operated on external funding since 2021 and continued to deliver on its objectives without funding support from Herefordshire Council. Funding is sourced on an annual basis for the administration of HCP.</p> <p>The updated cultural strategy and action plan will provide a clear strategic rationale and evidence base to support future grant applications or approaches for funding.</p>

## Consultees

39. The Cultural Strategy 2019-29 was developed through consultation with local organisations, communities and groups across Herefordshire to ensure that the unique needs of the county were being met through its core priorities. The priorities were informed by in-depth consultation with local government, cultural organisations, practitioners and other sectors, a three-month online public survey and research into national and international good practice.
40. The process to update the cultural strategy has included consultation with Herefordshire arts organisations and sector leaders, public online sessions, workshops with regional cultural organisations, discussions with Herefordshire Council officers and review sessions with Board members.
41. The Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and Herefordshire Council has a strong working relationship with and support from the Arts Council England regional lead and National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) relationship managers. Policy guidance from Arts Council England informed the original cultural strategy and has been incorporated into recent updates to strategic priorities.
42. Further consultation on the updated cultural strategy will take place once a final draft strategy is available for circulation.

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Herefordshire Cultural Partnership

Appendix 2 – Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-29

Appendix 3 – Herefordshire Cultural Sector Review, August 2024

Appendix 4 – Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2025-30 Draft Summary

## Background papers

None

## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 20/05/2025
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 21/05/2025
Legal	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 21/05/2025
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 20/05/2025
Procurement	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Risk	Paige McInerney	Date 20/05/2025
Approved by	Hilary Hall	Date 22/05/2025

## Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

HCP – Herefordshire Cultural Partnership

NPO – National Portfolio Organisation (funded by Arts Council England)

HCA – Hereford College of Arts

NMITE – New Model Institute of Technology and Engineering

UKSPF – UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Cultural Compact - A partnership between a variety of cultural organisations and stakeholders in a specific geographic area, like a city or region, aimed at supporting the local cultural sector and enhancing its contribution to development. Cultural compacts are an initiative originated and supported by Arts Council England from 2019.



# **HEREFORDSHIRE**

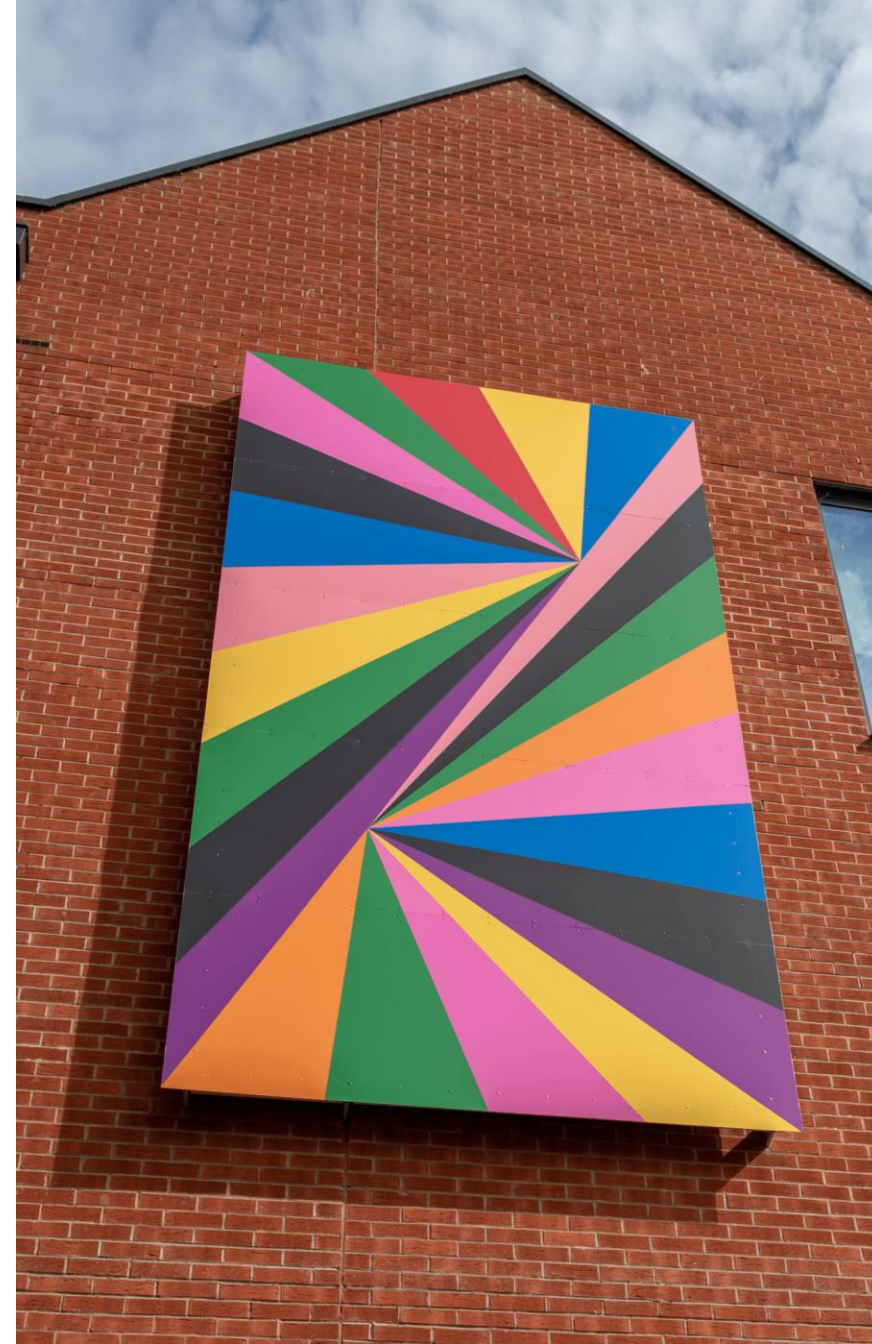
## **CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP**

# INTRODUCTION

Herefordshire Cultural Partnership is an independent consortium of arts, culture and heritage organisations, local government and businesses with a shared vision: **celebrating this county's creative and entrepreneurial spirit.**

We exist to drive forward Herefordshire's cultural strategy, create connections and spread the word that arts, culture and creative engagement plays an essential role for all people and places in Herefordshire.

Meadow Arts/HCA public art collaboration, Station Approach



# FORMATION

Herefordshire Cultural Partnership has taken a leading role in developing and overseeing cultural strategy for the county since 2015, when Herefordshire Council reduced its arts and cultural development team.

In 2016 Hereford launched a bid to become City of Culture 2021 with countywide public consultation about culture. Although the bid was unsuccessful, the project served to bring together like-minded cultural organisations and other stakeholders keen to champion and grow the cultural sector in Herefordshire.

**Herefordshire Cultural Partnership was registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee in 2018.**

2Faced Dance Company EVERYTHING [But the Girl] triple bill © Chris Nash





# OPERATION

- Herefordshire Cultural Partnership is an **independent constituted organisation** with a commitment to cross-sector membership.
- Board members **contribute on a voluntary basis**. Coordination has been paid for by ad hoc funding availability since 2018.
- The Board **meets quarterly** rotating around member bases.
- The Partnership focuses on **cultural organisations and creative industries** and does not include sports and leisure.
- All **6 National Portfolio Organisations** are represented on the Board.
- In 2025 the Partnership **reviewed its governance documentation** improving its membership Terms of Reference and Conflicts of Interest declaration, EDI policy and financial management processes.

The Partnership receives no direct funding from Herefordshire Council.

Year	Funding for administration
2021-2022	Arts Council £20,000
2022-2023	Arts Council £14,800
2023-2024	UKSPF £9,000
2024-2025	UKSPF £9,000

# BOARD MEMBERS

**NIC MILLINGTON** Chair of Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and CEO of Rural Media

**CLARE PURCELL** HCP Secretary and Executive Director, Meadow Arts

**ABIGAIL APPLETON** Principal, Hereford College of Arts

**IAN ARCHER** CEO and Artistic Director, The Courtyard

**ANA VAUGHN** Regional Manager, National Trust

**AMY HOWARD** Director, Ledbury Poetry

**ROBERT ELLIOT** Herefordshire Chamber of Business and Commerce

**LIZ WOMACK** Leominster Cultural Consortium

**DIANE MANSELL** CEO, Herefordshire County BID

**SARAH LEE** Culture & Leisure Lead, Herefordshire Council

**DAMIAN ETHERAADS** Museum & Art Gallery Lead, Herefordshire Council

**BRUCE HERRIOT** Chair, Three Choirs Festival

**LISA SULLIVAN** Arts Alive and Flicks in the Sticks

**LISLE TURNER** Creative Director, Open Sky

**JAMES PACEY** Chancellor, Hereford Cathedral

**TOM TRUE** Executive Director, Hay Castle Trust

**CLIFF WOOLLARD** CEO, Encore

**SOPHIE HEATH** CEO, Sidney Nolan Trust

# STRATEGIC ROLE

- Herefordshire Cultural Partnership **leads cultural sector development in the county and informs wider county-wide policy.**
- The Partnership is **responsible for the Cultural Strategy 2019-29** and delivering across five strategic priorities: Great Place; Children & Young People; Creative Economy; Cultural Democracy; Cultural Tourism.
- The Partnership **supports other networks** including Arts Council England LCEP, Herefordshire's National Portfolio Group (NPOs) funded by Arts Council England and the Creative Pathways volunteering network.
- The Partnership runs **a dedicated website The Shire:** [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk) providing information on the Cultural Partnership, sector news and creative opportunities.





# OVERVIEW

2016      2017      2018      2019      2020      2021      2022      2023      2024

City of  
Culture  
Bid



**HCP registered  
as Company  
limited by  
Guarantee**

HCP awarded  
£748k by Arts  
Council/ Heritage  
Lottery Fund for  
'A Great Place  
Scheme in  
Herefordshire  
(2018-21)

**Cultural  
Strategy  
2019-29  
launched**



HCP  
commissions  
'Developing  
Cultural  
Spaces and  
Places' study  
with BOP  
Consulting

**HCP  
expands  
Board  
membership**

HCP  
commissions  
'Get Creative:  
9 ways to  
Supercharge  
Herefordshire'  
study

HCP supports  
Young  
Reviewers  
programme  
with Ledbury  
Poetry Festival

HCP develops  
Place  
Partnership  
project bid to  
Arts Council  
using UKSPF  
funding.

HCP awarded  
£730k by Arts  
Council and  
Herefordshire  
Council for 'Our  
Place' creative  
health project

HCP collaborates  
on cultural sector  
studies with  
Herefordshire  
Council

# COMMISSIONS

The Herefordshire Cultural Partnership is recognised **as an expert body to consult with on cultural policy both locally and nationally**, lead on new sector reports and contribute to local growth initiatives.



A report **into Developing Cultural Spaces and Places in Hereford City** (2020) in partnership with BOP Consulting.  
[Developing Cultural Spaces and Places in Hereford City | The Shire](#)



A **'Get Creative'** report (2022) designed to stimulate the county's cultural and creative industries.  
[New report looks to boost Herefordshire's creative economy | The Shire](#)



In 2024 HCP collaborated with Herefordshire Council on **UKSPF-funded Cultural Sector and Events and Festivals studies** and helped inform the new Destination Management Plan for Herefordshire.



In 2024-25 the Chair of the Cultural Partnership was selected to undertake a **review of Arts Council England 'cultural compacts' nationally** and has been instrumental in the formation of other cultural compacts regionally.



In 2025 the Chair of the Cultural Partnership was selected to join the new **Herefordshire Economy and Place Board** playing a key role in co-ordinating activities across the county related to economy, growth and place-shaping.

# DELIVERY

As the county cultural compact, Herefordshire Cultural Partnership has acted as the appropriate body to **deliver largescale cultural projects on behalf of the county.**



HEREFORDSHIRE  
A GREAT PLACE

The £746k Heritage Lottery Fund / Arts Council **A Great Place project** (2018-21) used culture and heritage to support rural communities and cultural professionals. The Partnership administered 'go-and-see' bursaries, 'my place' cultural grants, workshops and training for practitioners, discovery labs for communities to try out creative activities and cultural apprenticeships to drive awareness, connectivity and growth in the sector.  
[Herefordshire's a Great Place | Rural Media](#)



Herefordshire Cultural Partnership was awarded £730k for its **Our Place creative health project** (2024-27) exploring how embedding arts and cultural creativity in our most deprived communities can support ill-health prevention, improve health and wellbeing and boost pride in place and rural identity. The project also includes peer learning and creative health trials to inform national policy.  
[Our Place | The Shire](#)



**HEREFORDSHIRE**  
CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP

# HERE FORD — SHIRE

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Cultural Strategy 2019–2029

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**‘Great places are places of anchorage with a sense of stability, places of possibility, places of connection, of learning and of inspiration.’**

*— Charles Landry, 2016*

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*Priority three: Creative Economy 19*

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*Priority five: Cultural Tourism 21*

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# WELCOME



**Culture is the  
key to what makes  
Herefordshire the  
wonderful county that it is.**

LADS (Ledbury Amateur  
Dramatics Society) at The  
Master's House, Ledbury



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**Successful counties are not just those that are economically sustainable. Their success is grounded in their high quality of life, their distinctive cultural identity, and their creative and entrepreneurial vibrancy.**

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Bromyard Speed Festival

**H**erefordshire is the fourth most sparsely populated county in England and yet remarkably compact with five historic market towns equidistant from Hereford City, creating not only virtual but physical ‘hub and spoke’ opportunities. Together with its varied and dramatic landscape, its historic buildings, agricultural heritage, and its nationally recognised black and white villages the county boasts a unique sense of place.

Culture is the key to what makes Herefordshire the wonderful county that it is, reflecting and communicating its distinctiveness and uniqueness. Engagement in cultural activity is a vital ingredient in the life of our community and the region as a whole, and plays an important part in enhancing the civic pride of our county.

Today Herefordshire has a rapidly growing variety of arts and cultural activity, an energetic music and festival scene, a thriving community of artists and craftspeople, a distinctive and in some senses unique food and drink culture, and vastly unexploited potential for a visitor

economy based on the county’s natural beauty and cultural heritage. The Government’s Industrial Strategy singles out the creative industries as being key to the UK’s growth, and notes that the sector is typified by small and micro-businesses. With its rapidly growing range of creative SMEs from artists to craft cider producers to digi-tech entrepreneurs, Herefordshire is well placed to benefit from the Government’s stated desire to support the growth of this sector.

This Cultural Strategy has been produced by Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (HCP), which comprises the county’s key cultural organisations, Herefordshire Council, the local business community, and a wide range of arts and heritage groups from across the area. The strategy has been informed by in-depth local consultation, a three-month online survey, an Arts Council funded consultancy, and research into national and international good practice.

We heartily invite you to work with us to make Herefordshire a great place to live, work and visit.



2Faced Dance  
Photo credit: Luke Evans

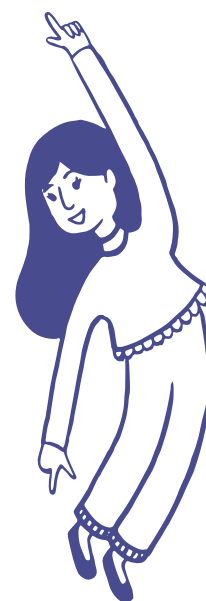


# 1

## INTRODUCTION

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CULTURE?

## & WHY DO WE NEED A CULTURAL STRATEGY?



The Garrick Singers, a collaboration between The Courtyard Centre for The Arts, The Music Pool in Hereford and the community.

**S**uccessful areas are recognised by their quality of life, by strong communities, their creative vibrancy, and cultural identity, all of which underpins an area's economic performance and national and international standing.

Culture is taken to be the broad framework that defines how people live and that which gives their lives value and meaning. It encompasses creativity, imagination, ambition, joy and wonder, and is normally though not necessarily expressed through creative activities and institutions.

The Herefordshire Cultural Strategy focuses on arts and heritage and includes a wide range of activity: performing arts, literature, music, crafts, visual and digital arts, photography, design, architecture, fashion along with our creative businesses, and the buildings and facilities where we access culture – museums, arts centres, theatres, churches, village halls, cinemas, libraries, archives, galleries. We include too our wonderful natural environment, gastronomy, and the creative activities that take place in our open spaces.

Although we are not treating culture so broadly as to include shelter, health, education, sport, nutrition

or social welfare, culture is now recognised as an essential and powerful basis for their effective provision and enhancement.

This strategy seeks to identify, expand and make more accessible the range of opportunities for residents and visitors to Herefordshire to experience and enjoy the arts and heritage that surround them. It is a means by which a wide range of relevant partners – individuals, organisations, businesses and institutions – can work together to achieve outcomes that will improve the lives and prospects of our communities, and enhance a sense of place and identity through increased awareness of our heritage.

The Cultural Strategy runs with the grain of other county strategic plans including Herefordshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy; Invest Herefordshire; Children and Young People's Plan etc. Importantly it provides the basis for planning and undertaking ambitious actions to bring about change, and the means for effecting that change through collaborative working, bids for funding, planning and organisation.



## OVERVIEW

In the text, “we” stands for all of us – individuals and organisations in the voluntary sector, the business sector, funders, strategic and elected bodies.

Herefordshire’s UK City of Culture 2021 bid confirmed what most Herefordians already know – that Herefordshire’s cultural ecology comprises a remarkable and rich range of arts and heritage activity, creative business, buildings, organisations, and outstanding natural assets.

There is undoubtedly much on which to build, however our conversations and research highlighted a wide variety of issues that individuals and groups in the county wanted to see addressed:

- ▶ The need to support and nurture talent, including local artists working across all genres and art forms;
- ▶ The need to build a stronger and more visible creative economy;
- ▶ The need to increase participation and promote inclusion in cultural and creative activity;
- ▶ The need to engage more effectively with children and young people;
- ▶ The need to raise the profile of Hereford and Herefordshire as a great place to live, work and visit.

These are just some of the issues that have informed the priorities laid out in this Cultural Strategy.



Hush Now Hidden Women from Feral Productions  
Photo credit: Adam Knight





**This Cultural Strategy serves as a starting point from which a carefully managed set of interventions and investments into arts, heritage and culture can be developed. It proposes actions, based upon wide consultation, that have the potential to bring about real change for Herefordshire communities.**

Consultation has told us that widening participation in the arts and heritage, including for children and young people, is essential for a healthy and productive society. So too is the planning and investment in creative skills, leadership and management necessary to sustain our cultural institutions. We know that together we must do more in key areas such as tourism and cultural enterprise – visitors to the county bring important revenue streams as do the establishment of new creative businesses. We recognise the huge commercial opportunities that have opened up over the last few years, and the access to new cultural experiences that digital technologies now offer almost everyone. New models of delivery and co-operation could breathe new life and generate new uses for our cultural and civic buildings.

We recognise that we have proposed a wide range of ambitious actions to deliver the vision and outcomes, and not all of them can be achieved at once. However, through collaboration and cross-sector partnerships we are confident that over the coming years delivering against these priorities will be transformational, inspiring and enriching the lives of those who live and work in Herefordshire, and those who visit or seek to settle in the county.

To ensure that the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019–29 remains relevant and reflects the views of local communities we will be regularly asking for your input to the following year’s action plan. To widen our consultation and add momentum to the Cultural Strategy, Rural Media is leading on behalf of HCP the Herefordshire’s Great Place project, sponsored by Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England. The Great Place project has launched the ‘Big Conversation’ which aims to enable everyone to shape, grow and celebrate our cultural identity.

### THE BIG CONVERSATION COMPRISES...

- ▶ A content rich web platform [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk) hosting a virtual network and consultation, together with profiling key arts and heritage projects;
- ▶ An online culture data hub offering publicly accessible up to date information on cultural organisations, audiences, issues and trends;
- ▶ An annual culture conference will offer inspiration and ideas, opportunities to hear about progress, best practice from elsewhere in the UK and Europe, and plans for the year ahead;
- ▶ An events and seminar programme bringing together smaller groups to debate and address specific issues and themes.











## 2

# VISION AND PRIORITIES

## OUR VISION

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**For Herefordshire to be a culturally vibrant, prosperous and sought after county in which to live, work and to visit. Hallmarks of the County will be its glorious landscape, its heritage and history, its diverse creative and cultural offer and its sense of ambition.**

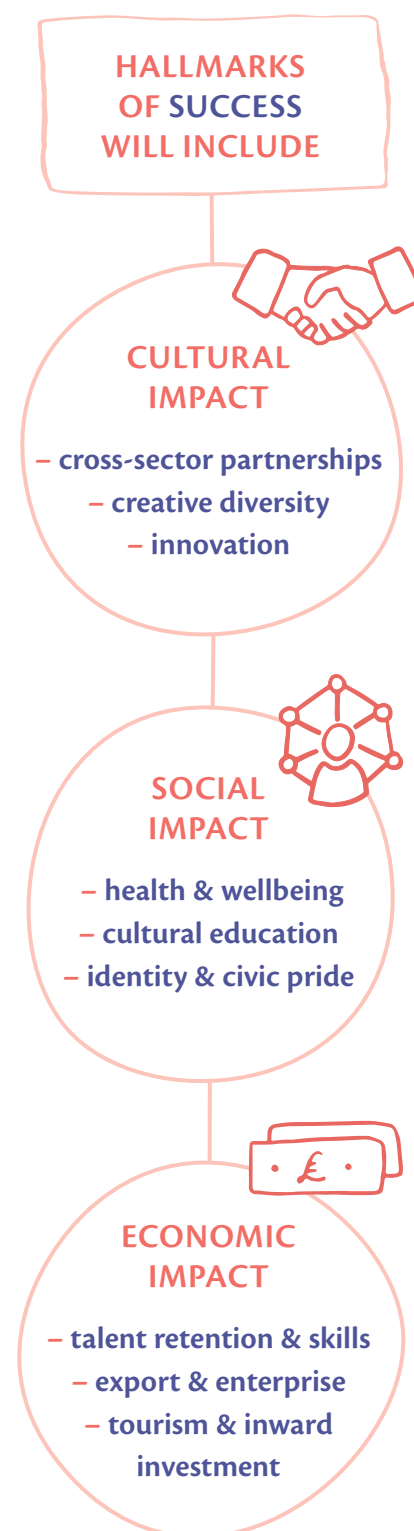
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The Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019–29 lays out how we can maximise the county’s cultural assets. Our emphasis is on partnership working, talent development, cultural education, participation, creative enterprise, and national and international profile. Reaching new audiences and developing new ways of working to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from involvement in cultural activities.

This strategy places investment in culture at the heart of civic pride, place, health & wellbeing, and economic growth. For it to achieve its vision it is important that the action in this strategy remain flexible and consultative in order to stay fresh and embrace new ideas, people and technologies.

## By 2029 we will have worked with our partners to deliver the following five outcomes...

- 1. Herefordshire will have a connected and sustainable cultural infrastructure underpinned by a creative workforce offering high quality arts and heritage activity and experiences available to all residents and visitors.**
- 2. Herefordshire’s rural communities will have the opportunity to be fully engaged and proactive in shaping, participating and growing the county’s cultural offer.**
- 3. All children and young people in Herefordshire will have access to high quality contemporary cultural education and career development opportunities.**
- 4. Culture and the creative industries will play a distinctive role in contributing to the economic success of the county and region.**
- 5. Herefordshire’s cultural profile and offer will attract national and international audiences, visitors, and new businesses.**



# OUR PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

## 1 GREAT PLACE

A resilient cultural infrastructure that makes Herefordshire a great place to live, work and to visit

## 2 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Listening to children and young people, and connecting them to culture and connectivity

## 3 CREATIVE ECONOMY

Building and supporting vibrant creative enterprises

## 4 CULTURAL DEMOCRACY

The arts and heritage are for everyone

## 5 CULTURAL TOURISM

Raising Herefordshire's national and international profile



## PRIORITY 1 GREAT PLACE

### A resilient cultural infrastructure that makes Herefordshire a great place to live, work and to visit

The sustainability and development of Herefordshire's cultural organisations is key to the county's growth and wellbeing. It will be essential over the coming years that Herefordshire is able to offer a contemporary cultural experience supported by its professional arts and heritage organisations. Arts Council recently confirmed support of over £3,000,000 to the county's major arts organisations for 2018–22. Further investment through project funding, including by Heritage Lottery Fund, for a range of artists, arts and heritage organisations over the same period will significantly add to this figure.

Herefordshire Council has pledged support for the work of HCP and to the priorities laid out in this Strategy. Key to this collaborative working will be finding innovative ways of sustaining the County's libraries and heritage assets; and widening their appeal and attracting new audiences.

### We will...

- ▶ Establish the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (governance, membership, capacity) as the lead cultural development body for the county.
- ▶ Strengthen partnership working across the cultural sector, and facilitate innovative links with the private, public and voluntary sectors.
- ▶ Work with Herefordshire Council and other stakeholders to facilitate greater community ownership of assets and spaces for cultural purposes, including creation of a Hereford City cultural quarter.
- ▶ Develop new funding models and financial instruments to support Herefordshire's cultural infrastructure.
- ▶ Support cultural tourism by promoting a programme of festivals, events and exhibitions distinguished by innovation and diversity that enhances the rural experience.
- ▶ Strengthen digital communications about culture across the County including new approaches to the use of cultural data.





## PRIORITY 2

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## Listening to children and young people, and connecting them to culture and connectivity

Cultural and creative learning is a vital part of any education. It gives children and young people the confidence and capability that they will need in a world and economy that depends upon the skills that it provides. It is a basic building block in building the future of the UK.

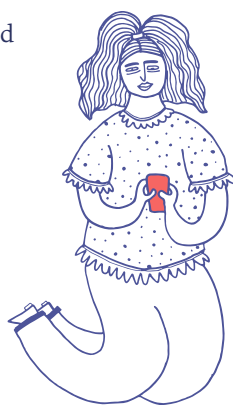
However, according to a 2018 BBC survey creative arts subjects are being cut back in many secondary schools in England. Schools reported that the increased emphasis on core academic subjects, together with funding pressures, were the most common reasons for cutting back on resources for creative subjects.

Other factors can impact on young people failing to engage, or be excited and challenged by for example a performance, or acquisition of new digital creative skills, including socio-economic background, mental health, or caring responsibilities. In Herefordshire rural isolation can also be a major inhibitor to participation.

The Cultural Strategy aims to increase the opportunities for children and young people within formal and informal education settings to take part in a wide range of accessible arts and heritage activities, and to find their creative voice.

Hereford College of Arts and Hereford Sixth Form College are exemplary hubs of creative further and higher education and training, and the county's new university has committed its support to cultural enrichment across the county.

We aim to make a real difference for children and young people, including those who currently have fewer opportunities to experience the richness of the county's diverse arts and cultural resources.



## We will...

- ▶ Support strategic initiatives that seek to establish a cultural offer based on shared resources, new partnerships and place-making activities that give children and young people the chance to visit; experience and participate in high quality arts and heritage activity.
- ▶ Work closely with schools and colleges through project co-production and curriculum development to attract and support a diverse range of students.
- ▶ Support and train young people to lead the development of their own cultural events.
- ▶ Support children & young people to develop their talent and participation by investing in places where they can explore, rehearse, and create new work and learn new skills.
- ▶ Strengthen relationships with Arts Council's Specialist Support Organisations (SSO) including Arts Connect, and promote participation in Arts Council's Cultural Education; Arts Award, and Arts Mark programmes.
- ▶ Broker relationships with national cultural organisations in order to bring inspirational projects, performances, and exhibitions to the county.
- ▶ Maximise children and young people's engagement and participation in culture through curation, production and distribution of digital content.





## PRIORITY 3

# CREATIVE ECONOMY

### Building and supporting vibrant creative enterprises

The UK has one of the largest, most successful and fastest growing creative industries sectors in the world; based on a long tradition of cultural expression through music, literature and the performing and visual arts; now includes advertising, architecture, design, publishing and fashion industries, and the film, media and video gaming sectors.

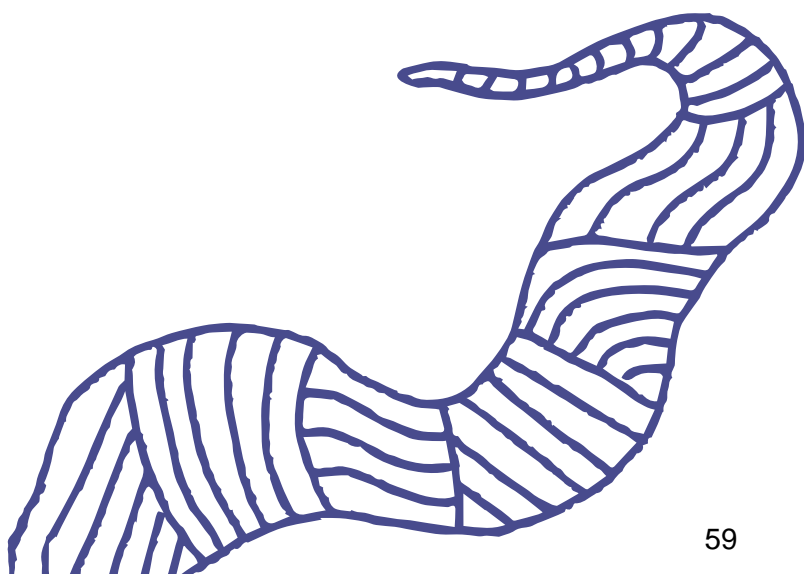
These new creative businesses are well suited to playing a key role in growing Herefordshire's economy and social vibrancy. They are mainly high value micro businesses, have minimal impact upon the natural environment, attract and retain young talent, and motivate employers to up-skill and invest in new technology.

Furthermore, research shows that creative jobs support all other economic sectors; will be more resistant to automation; and that those working in creative jobs have higher levels of wellbeing.

Outcomes from the Cultural Strategy will be a stronger and a more visible creative economy supported by the development and retention of creative and entrepreneurial talent.

### We will...

- ▶ Ensure that development of creative industries inform economic policy and priorities including of Herefordshire Council, Marches LEP and Midlands Engine.
- ▶ Work closely with Herefordshire Business Board and Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber to map local creative businesses, understand better their needs, and agree a common vision for their support and promotion.
- ▶ Create more pathways into training in arts, heritage and culture, and career opportunities in the broader creative and knowledge economy.
- ▶ Increase the scale and diversity of the creative workforce in Herefordshire.
- ▶ Support the regeneration of underused buildings to provide 21st Century offices, studios, exhibition and meeting spaces for cultural entrepreneurs, cultural production and fabrication.
- ▶ Establish a county-wide network for artists and cultural organisations to collaborate and develop new enterprises, products and services.
- ▶ Create a 'business booster' network to provide access to high quality advice for start-ups and small enterprises on exporting, intellectual property (IP) and access to finance.





## PRIORITY 4

# CULTURAL DEMOCRACY

### The arts and heritage are for everyone

Culture gives people a sense of belonging within our towns and villages. A broad range of human creativity that is in some shape or form about ‘making art’ takes place outside the professional arts or creative industries. This strategy recognises the vital importance of publicly supported arts, heritage and cultural activity, but understands well that everyday creative activity in communities is often overlooked. In Herefordshire this activity takes very many forms: choirs, writing groups, photography clubs, local festivals, weaving and painting classes, play-schemes, local history talks, etc.

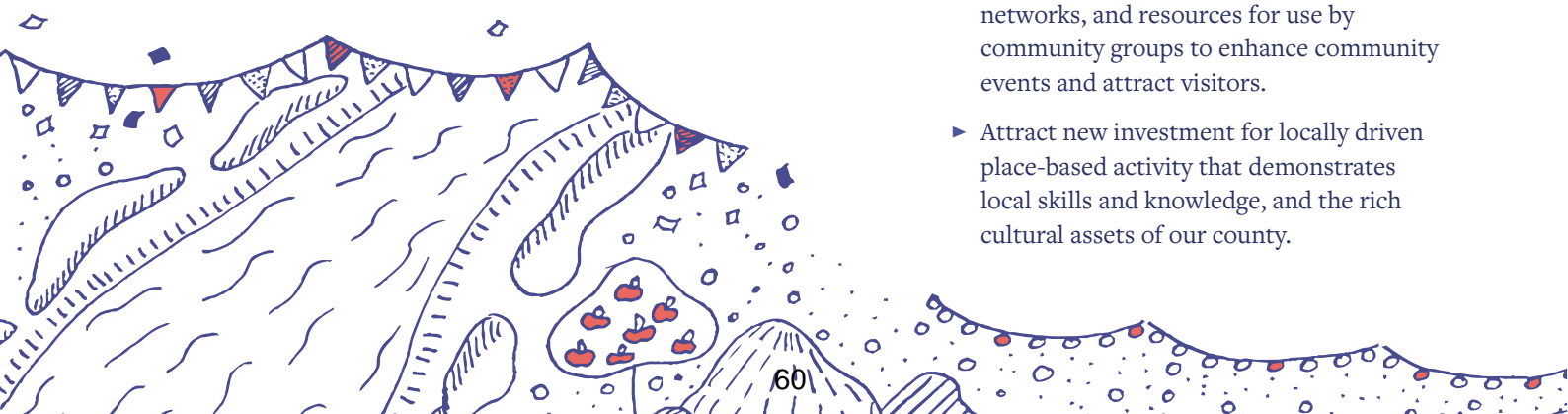
The term Cultural Democracy describes an approach to arts and culture that actively engages everyone in deciding what counts as culture, where it happens, who makes it, and who experiences it. This strategy will ensure that the thousands of people in Herefordshire that are participating in creative activity as a regular part of their lives are recognised and better supported.

The digital revolution has increased levels of participation in informal cultural and creative activity. It has created new networks and forms of interaction, transformed the production and distribution of cultural content and allowed new forms of arts and culture to emerge.

It is clear that for local people to celebrate and strengthen their communities through creative and cultural activity they require places to meet, skills, connections and funding. Through new engagement initiatives, training and digital tools we will increase participation in arts and heritage, and promote inclusion in cultural and creative activity.

### We will...

- ▶ Strengthen the connections and networks within and between local communities through highlighting informal arts and heritage activity on the web platform [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk).
- ▶ Support and promote the value of inter-generational initiatives that connect young artists with the knowledge, contacts and resources of older residents.
- ▶ Address barriers to participation and improve access to arts and cultural experiences through programmes such as Herefordshire’s a Great Place.
- ▶ Raise awareness and understanding of the social, health and economic value of local arts and heritage activity in rural areas within local & national policy and among donors and investors.
- ▶ Provide access to information, artist networks, and resources for use by community groups to enhance community events and attract visitors.
- ▶ Attract new investment for locally driven place-based activity that demonstrates local skills and knowledge, and the rich cultural assets of our county.





## PRIORITY 5

# CULTURAL TOURISM



### Raising Herefordshire's national and international profile

Herefordshire's outstanding natural beauty, its picturesque market towns and villages, its rural and agricultural heritage, its location and easy access from major cities of Birmingham, Bristol and Cardiff all create the potential for the county to become a prime visitor destination. While tourism is vitally important to the County's economy, generating £450m from over 5 million visitors each year and sustaining the equivalent of 7,000 full time jobs, cultural tourism only accounts for 1% of visitor activity.

The Herefordshire Destination Plan 2018–22 outlines a vision for the future for tourism in the county, and a set of priorities, together with actions and timeframes by which achieve the anticipated outcomes. Through working closely with the lead Destination Management Organisation (DMO) and Herefordshire Council, the Cultural Strategy seeks to support the growth of cultural tourism in the county.

The largest medieval map of the known world, the Hereford Mappa Mundi attracts visitors from across the globe. Already festivals and events such as Ledbury Poetry Festival, Borderlines Film Festival, and Three Choirs Festival attract national and international visitors. In March and April 2018 the cascade of individual ceramic poppies that formed the Weeping Window installation at Hereford Cathedral attracted 190,000 visitors. To name just a few creative companies with strong international links: 2-Faced Dance Company and Fetch Theatre regularly tour work into Europe and the Far East. It is by development of high profile events and product, and improved promotion of such cultural assets and product that Herefordshire will find its rightful place on the national and international map.

### We will...

- ▶ Encourage communication between cultural organisations and the responsible body for destination management and marketing.
- ▶ Work collaboratively with the Destination Management Partnership to extend Herefordshire's engagement with national and international visitors.
- ▶ Enhance the rural experience by effective digital marketing of festivals, events and exhibitions.
- ▶ Build upon the reach of Herefordshire's cultural organisations to highlight the investment potential and attractions of the county.
- ▶ Encourage and support national and international working in our creative industries through knowledge events and incentivised schemes.
- ▶ In partnership with the DMO and other strategic bodies promote Herefordshire's cultural attractions nationally and internationally.
- ▶ Support artists and content producers to create 'visitor pathways' that powerfully reveal Herefordshire's deep rural tangible and intangible heritage, thereby adding momentum to the county's ambition for cultural tourism.
- ▶ Identify and attract investment to support international co-commissions, touring and residencies with high profile artists.



Louis Parker-Evans and Sam Buswell in *What The Moon Saw*, performed by 2Faced Dance  
Photo credit: Luke Evans



# 3

## MAKING IT HAPPEN

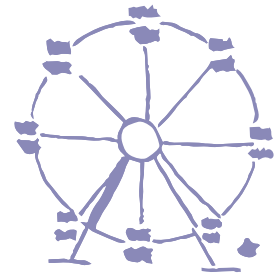
# 2019/20 ACTION PLAN

## April

Launch HCP website  
[www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk).

## May

Herefordshire Cultural Strategy is available on [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk) & is shared across the region.



2019

## June

Create / Fuel, a one-day conference connects and inspires young creatives. This is the 2nd Pride of Place conference supported by The Elmley Foundation.

Establish a youth collective with a passion for cultural events.

## July

Great Place project funds five creative projects that bring digital technology, arts, heritage and communities together through Hidden Gems grant scheme.

## September

Launch Business + Culture Working Together campaign and seminars with H&W Chamber of Commerce.

Support the Creative Connections Herefordshire network to develop a long term plan & goals.

Launch Directories of festivals, events & exhibitions on [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk).

## December

Appoint independent chair + new board members to Herefordshire Cultural Partnership.

## Late 2019

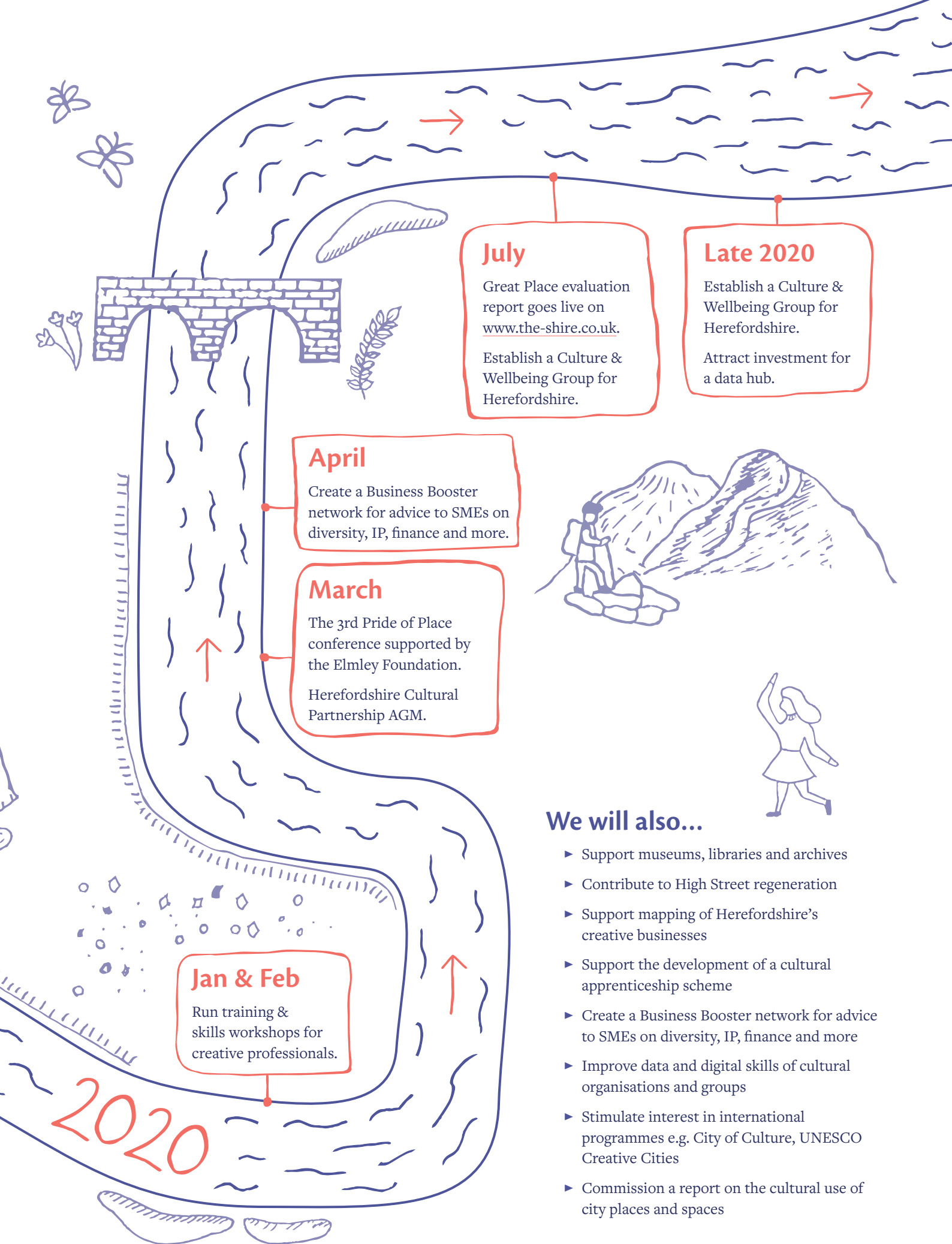
Represent creative industries on regional cultural panels.



HEREFORDSHIRE  
CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP

THE SHIRE  
ARTS. HERITAGE. CULTURE





## We will also...

- ▶ Support museums, libraries and archives
- ▶ Contribute to High Street regeneration
- ▶ Support mapping of Herefordshire's creative businesses
- ▶ Support the development of a cultural apprenticeship scheme
- ▶ Create a Business Booster network for advice to SMEs on diversity, IP, finance and more
- ▶ Improve data and digital skills of cultural organisations and groups
- ▶ Stimulate interest in international programmes e.g. City of Culture, UNESCO Creative Cities
- ▶ Commission a report on the cultural use of city places and spaces

## CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

A number of cross-cutting themes that align closely with local and national policies will be mapped on to our strategic priorities, and will be used as criteria for evaluating and developing projects and activities.



### PARTNERSHIP WORKING

1. Effective collaborative working, information sharing and action is the fundamental key to making best use of resources, taking in both public and private sector partners. The Herefordshire Cultural Partnership will play a critical role in fostering greater partnership working.

---



### DIGITAL INNOVATION

2. Prosperity and the development of new and digital technologies will be the key to attracting and retaining people in Herefordshire, and in turn providing support for local cultural organisations and the activities that they could develop. Mapping of existing provision and digital capability and activity will be key to evidencing the social and economic value of the cultural sector to the County.

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### HEALTH & WELLBEING

3. Recognise that exciting and engaging cultural activities and experiences support better lives. We will encourage and support cultural organisations to prioritise in their planning and programming health and wellbeing outcomes.

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### INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

4. Support for organisations to develop creative opportunities for individuals and groups who experience isolation or discrimination, including those with less opportunity to participate due to geographical isolation and/or socio-economic circumstance.

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### LIFELONG LEARNING

5. For cultural activities in all forms to be a catalyst for learning at any age. Increasing higher and further education places, along with vocational training such as cultural apprenticeships will be integral to the county's economic and cultural development.



Borderlines Film Festival's gala opening  
Photo credit: Matthew Evans

## DELIVERY

Key to success will be forming new cross-sector partnerships and coalitions, and demonstrating the value of culture to strengthening the health and wellbeing of our communities, attracting and retaining talent, and delivering new investment and economic growth.

Updates of progress and activity will be published on the new Herefordshire culture website [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk) along with useful resources related to our vision and strategic priorities.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (HCP), which comprises members of the county's cultural organisations, Herefordshire Council and business community, has produced the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy on behalf of the whole county, and will be responsible for driving the strategy forward. HCP's role is to:

- ▶ Champion Herefordshire's cultural strategy and cultural ambition
- ▶ Oversee the development and delivery of the cultural strategy, producing an annual action plan with specific objectives and targets
- ▶ Support strategic programmes and identify key initiatives to deliver the Cultural Strategy action plan



- ▶ Take collective responsibility for ensuring that cultural funding is allocated properly and against agreed priorities
- ▶ Develop a shared framework for monitoring performance and progress against key targets and outcomes
- ▶ Monitor activity against the Cultural Strategy's Strategic Objectives and Key Actions and publish an annual review
- ▶ Examine and respond to local, regional, national and international environments and policies to ensure that the Cultural Strategy's vision and objectives remain valid





Yinka Shonibare CBE's Creatures of the Mappa-Mundi. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery. Meadow Arts commission, 2018. Photo credit: Stefan Handy





# 4

## REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- ▶ Strategic policy context for cultural development in Herefordshire – see overleaf
- ▶ About Herefordshire (social & economic profile, and cultural assets) – see [www.the-shire.co.uk/about](http://www.the-shire.co.uk/about)
- ▶ Herefordshire Cultural Partnership Board Members – see [www.the-shire.co.uk/herefordshireculturalpartnership](http://www.the-shire.co.uk/herefordshireculturalpartnership)
- ▶ Action Plan 2019 (Yr1) & 2020–21 (Yrs2&3) – download at [www.the-shire.co.uk/herefordshireculturalpartnership](http://www.the-shire.co.uk/herefordshireculturalpartnership)







## POLICY REFERENCES...

- ▶ [Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future \(White Paper\)](#)
- ▶ [Independent Review of the Creative Industries](#)
- ▶ [Partner, Investor, Champion: An introduction to the Arts Council's role in place-making \(Arts Council England\)](#)
- ▶ [Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy Be Well, Keep Well, Live Well \(Herefordshire Council\)](#)
- ▶ [Invest Herefordshire Herefordshire's Economic Vision \(Herefordshire Council\)](#)
- ▶ [Herefordshire's Children and Young People's Plan: Giving children and young people a great start in life \(Herefordshire Council\)](#)
- ▶ [National Portfolio Organisations 2018–20 \(Arts Council England, How we invest public money\)](#)
- ▶ [Basis for Cultural Education Guide for the future of school-based and extracurricular cultural education](#)
- ▶ [A blueprint for growth. Creative Industries Federation response to the government's consultation: 'Building our Industrial Strategy'](#)
- ▶ [Experimental Culture: A horizon scan for the arts and culture sector \(NESTA\)](#)
- ▶ [Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth The 2015 Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value](#)
- ▶ [Cultural Democracy In Practice by 64 Million Artists with Arts Council England](#)
- ▶ [DCMS: Culture is Digital](#)
- ▶ [Rural Herefordshire Destination Plan 2018–22](#)

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A full list and links to the above policies and documents which inform the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019–29 can be found online at [www.the-shire.co.uk/herfordshireculturalstrategy](http://www.the-shire.co.uk/herfordshireculturalstrategy).

Read more at [www.the-shire.co.uk](http://www.the-shire.co.uk).

# Get in touch...

## #HfdsCulture

**Illustrations by 2019 Hereford  
College of Arts students**

Dominic Davis *p.17*

Klaudia Berezka *p.18*

Thomas Trafford *p.19*

Natalie Allison *p.20, p.24–25*

Simone Baugh *p.21 and others*

**Document designed by**  
**TDL | CREATIVE**

# Herefordshire Cultural Sector Review

**Final report (revised)**

**August 2024**

Prepared by Iain Bennett, Steve Hunt and Lynne McCadden



THE FIFTH SECTOR



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## Executive Summary

This report provides a review of Herefordshire's cultural strategy at the midway point of its 2019-2029 implementation timeline. Drawing on stakeholder consultation, including valuable insights from Hereford College of Arts, Herefordshire BID and the Director of Museums alongside a range of smaller cultural and creative organisations from across the county, it offers recommendations to sharpen focus and strengthen the impact of strategic leadership to build on the exciting investments already committed during the second half of the implementation period.

### Key findings

- **Resilience of Herefordshire's creative business base** is underlined by continued growth in the number of registered enterprises, from 645 in 2020 to 695 in 2023, despite the disruptive impact of COVID lockdowns.
- **GVA of Herefordshire's cultural and creative sectors grew by 38% between 2020 and 2022**, from £83.2m to £114.7m<sup>1</sup> – a far faster rate of growth than that for the county as a whole.
- Increased output has been driven primarily by productivity growth, not by increasing the scale of employment. GVA per capita in the sector grew by 31% in the same period, to £54,100 – nearly **double the average GVA per capita** for all employment in Herefordshire of £27,278<sup>2</sup>
- Analysis of LinkedIn identified a **creative workforce of 4,100** (including freelance and self-employed workers) – double the size of creative employment reported in national statistics.
- Adding the contribution of the wider creative workforce increases our estimate of the sector's economic output to **£229.7m in GVA- 5% of Herefordshire's total**.

### Highly-skilled freelance creatives drive productivity and growth

This evidence emphasises the critical role played by **freelances and self-employed** workers in the rural creative economy. Contrary to the received view that they are less productive and experience greater precarity of employment opportunities, freelance and self-employed creatives may be expected to generate greater revenue than those in other occupational categories due to their higher levels of knowledge and skill. Their contribution is critical in enabling businesses to manage and reduce entrepreneurial risk,

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<sup>1</sup> The Fifth Sector analysis of Office of National Statistics data on employment and economic output

<sup>2</sup> Herefordshire Council (2024). Understanding Herefordshire.

<https://understanding.herefordshire.gov.uk/economy-place/topics-relating-to-the-economy/productivity-and-economic-growth/>

de-risk market uncertainties, and reduce the amount of finance required for innovation and business start-ups, ultimately promoting **innovation, enterprise, and growth**.

### A Place-specific Model of Growth

National and regional strategies have for the last three decades been built upon a narrative around ‘creative industries’ formulated around the assumption that physical agglomerations of urban businesses and supply chains would drive growth of the local and national creative economy. As a consequence, rural creative economies such as Herefordshire have been disadvantaged by the assumption that their route to growth lies through replicating an urban model of creative industries. Our evidence shows that cultural and creative industries make vital and diverse contributions to Herefordshire's economy and quality of life, but its full potential remains untapped due to its fragmentation, inconsistent leadership focus and lack of coordination of investment in delivery and communication.

Whilst significant progress has been made in baseline connections and network growth, Herefordshire has lacked a model of growth which reflects the way in which the county's creative economy differs from that of urban and metropolitan areas and recognises (and celebrates) the differences between places within the county. There remains a pressing need to develop a co-production model (including flexible access to workspace and production facilities) that can build scale across dispersed cultural organisations in Herefordshire and neighbouring rural areas.

Three new initiatives demonstrate renewed focus on a place-specific model which offers the potential to leverage investment needed to grow capacity of the creative economy across the county:

- The **Hereford Museum** redevelopment project and early years operations offers opportunities to build a centre of excellence, co-production, training and outreach to catalyse creativity and collaboration county wide, providing a reinforcing county-wide network and national profile. This would in turn help provide evidence of unmet demand for additional production capacity to help direct both public and private investment into the cultural sector and creative industries.
- The operation of the **Herefordshire BID and Visitor Economy Plan Network** offers an opportunity to clarify the role and priorities of the sector in servicing and growth of key cultural visitor segments.
- The success of the ***Our Place*** bid (a £596k grant from the National Lottery through Arts Council England to initiate a transformative programme in Leominster, South Wye and the Golden Valley, facilitated by a further £100k from the Council)<sup>3</sup> highlights the potential for Herefordshire Cultural Partnership to build and

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.the-shire.co.uk/news/ourplacefunding>

further focus collaborations across the existing centres of cultural practice and learning (in festivals, market towns, established colleges and dynamic creative businesses).

Each of them has potential to improve links between existing centres of delivery and county-wide sectors to enable them to respond in a more agile and effective manner to their overall opportunities for cultural development. In turn, this will enhance delivery of the cultural strategy's objectives.

## Recommendations

To capitalise on Herefordshire's unique cultural assets and drive progress over the next five years, we recommend:

- 1. Core administrative support will be needed to progress any or all of the recommendations.**

Uncertainty about the likelihood of continuing support and investment is arguably the single greatest barrier to developing resilience, retaining talent and attracting investment to the sector.

- 2. Capital investment plans need to reflect the needs expressed by practitioners through consultation.**

Better coordination is needed to leverage diverse funding streams and align cultural initiatives with broader economic and social policy agendas.

Expecting creative business owners to adapt to unsuitable premises in off-centre locations which require access to a private car places further barriers in the way of growth and investment. Providing suitable production and showcasing infrastructure within the county (frequently identified through consultation as a key need to help existing business grow and attract new talent) has the potential to amplify the returns from co-production and collaborative working.

- 3. Herefordshire's cultural and creative strategy needs to be articulated in a shared language which businesses, freelancers, audiences, visitors and investors understand.**

The refreshed strategy needs to speak to people in terms they understand. It needs its own voice to articulate the passion and excitement about cultural activity across the county. The right language can better articulate and project the opportunities for local people to get involved, the benefits of increased attraction and retention of creative talent and potential for investment. For example, we should talk about Hereford College of Art as an *art school* and highlight the critical role of *participatory and community arts* in developing both skills and audiences.



Reframing the cultural strategy vision to emphasise the benefits of community engagement and co-production will help to drive innovation and investment in a diverse creative offer that leverages Herefordshire's natural and cultural heritage while addressing regional opportunities.

### Next steps

With focused leadership and sustained collaboration, Herefordshire can overcome fragmentation in its cultural sector, recognising the value of increasing specialisation within and collaboration between different cultural and creative sectors as a model for rural creative economies and firmly establishing itself as a distinctive cultural destination. To achieve this, partners should:

- Convene a **strategy refresh workshop** with key stakeholders to reframe the vision, strengthen the Cultural Partnership's strategic leadership role and sharpen objectives for the next five years. This should establish clear, measurable objectives for the strategy's second half, balancing specific actions with ongoing network building and allowing for adaptive management.
- Commission a **cultural asset mapping exercise** as a foundation for future planning and use the findings to create a detailed map of creative diversity and opportunities across the whole county, identifying potential clusters and collaboration points.
- Develop a detailed implementation plan for **scaling the co-production model** across the county. This will better articulate the value of cultural investment to diverse stakeholders.
- Create a **communications strategy**, including a robust communications plan, to demonstrate the value of cultural investment to council stakeholders and align with broader policy agendas around economic development, health, and wellbeing.
- Leverage the Hereford Museum redevelopment and other flagship projects to foster county-wide creativity, skills development, and cultural engagement. This will establish a **visionary collaboration** between key institutions like the Hereford Museum, Hereford College of Arts, and rural media organisations to develop a co-production model that can scale across the region.

By taking these steps, Herefordshire can build on its progress to date, overcome fragmentation, and position itself as a leader in rural cultural development. The key lies in harnessing the county's unique assets, affirming and promoting models to support genuine co-production and collaboration, and demonstrating clear value to both local communities and regional partners.



## Introduction

Herefordshire's 10-year cultural strategy, launched in 2019, set out to position the county as a "culturally vibrant, prosperous and sought after" destination. At the strategy's midpoint, significant progress had been made in building networks and baseline connections, reflected in sharp increases in sector productivity. However, the review identified a need for sharper focus, stronger leadership, and a more coordinated approach to leveraging existing resources and new investments.

The creative industries continue to be a major driver of the UK economy, with particular potential in rural areas to support wellbeing, attract and retain talent, and drive inclusive growth. However, realising this potential requires overcoming challenges of geographic dispersion, limited infrastructure, and competition from urban centres.

In Herefordshire, the cultural sector is a source of vibrancy, identity and innovation, but it must overcome fragmentation and inconsistent investment to fulfil its promise. The review aimed to chart a path towards a more cohesive, ambitious approach that could position Herefordshire as a leader in rural cultural development.

## Scope & Methodology

This midpoint review encompassed:

1. Mapping of creative employment and the scale and significance of Herefordshire's cultural and creative industries (CCI).
2. Stakeholder consultation with businesses, practitioners, educators and policymakers, including in-depth discussions with Council officers and key figures like the Director of Museums.
3. Analysis of strategy implementation to date, including progress on stated objectives and emergence of new opportunities.
4. Assessment of the current policy and funding landscape, identifying potential for greater coordination and alignment.

The aim was to develop holistic recommendations that could sharpen the strategy's focus, strengthen leadership, and drive meaningful progress in the second half of the implementation period.

## Mapping Herefordshire's Cultural and Creative Industries

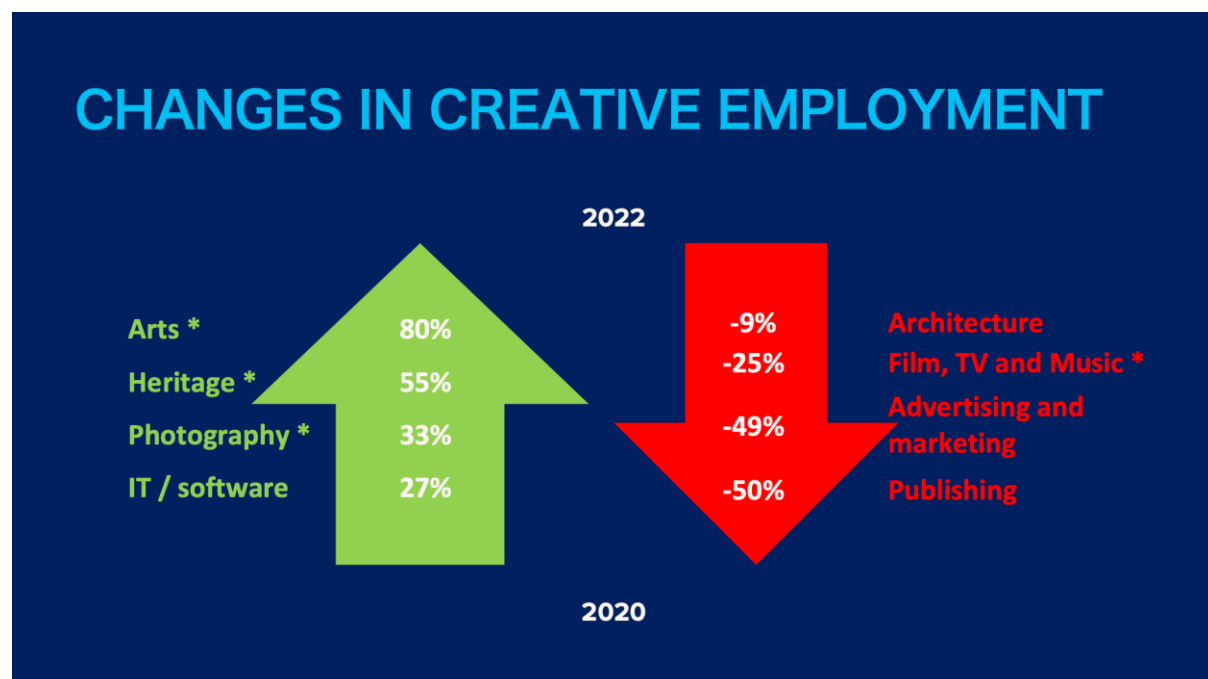
### Herefordshire's creative workforce

Creative employment in Herefordshire showed resilience in the face of COVID disruption, growing by 5% between 2020 and 2022 to reach 2,120 individuals (including both full time and part time roles). Increases in employment in software development and the arts balanced out a fall in creative services (Advertising and marketing, Architecture) and Publishing.

Largest employment sectors were:

- IT, software and computer services – 860 employees, split roughly evenly between software development and publishing (including computer games) and IT consultancy
- Music, performing and visual arts – 315 employees, an increase of 110 jobs (over a third of the total) over the period

Figure 1 Change in Creative Industries employment in Herefordshire, 2020-2022



- Asterisked sub-sectors are those within DCMS's definition of cultural sector; others from creative industries definition.

Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of employment data from Office of National Statistics' (ONS) Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2022

The increase in employment in Arts and Heritage is notable when set against the backdrop of disruption to the sector from COVID lockdowns over 2020 and 2021.

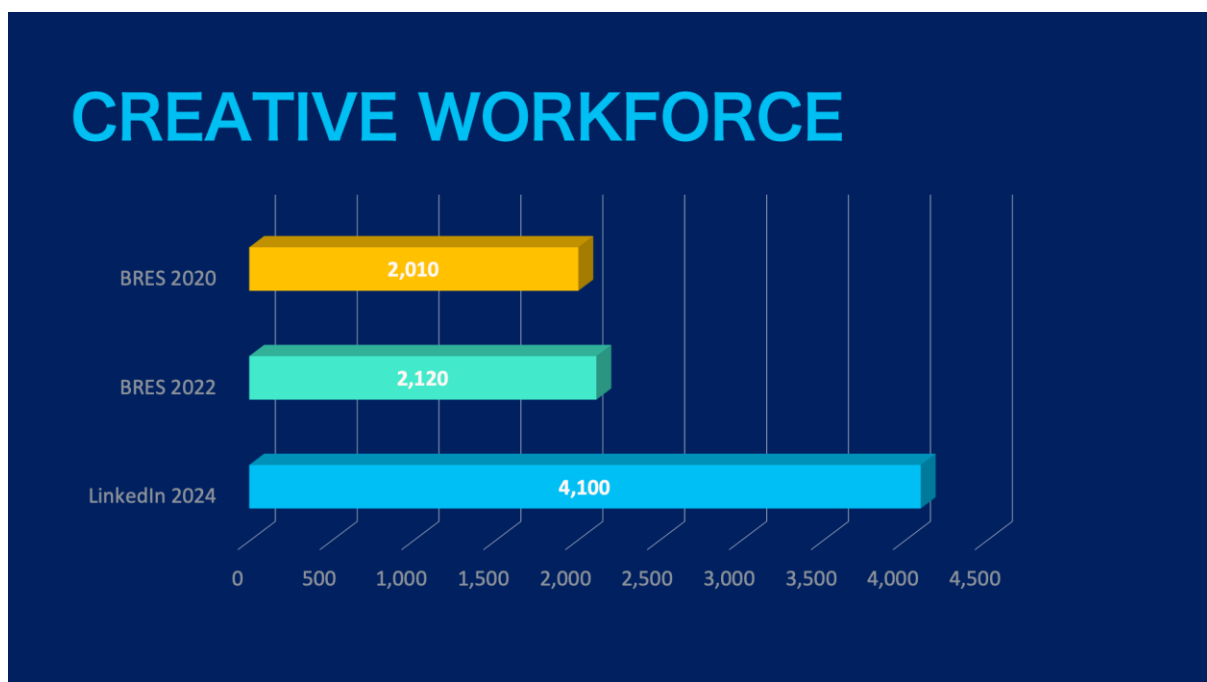
## Identifying the freelance and self-employed creative workforce

A frequent criticism of ONS data is that they omit freelance and self-employed workers (and even registered companies which do not make PAYE or VAT returns) and therefore understate the scale of the creative workforce. To counter this, analysis of LinkedIn helped identify an additional 2,000 creative workers located in the county, many of them freelance and self-employed; this brought the scale of Herefordshire's creative workforce to 4,100.

These findings contradicted the impression of a fall in the number employed in creative services: Design and designer fashion (739 subscribers) and Advertising and marketing (694) were two of the three largest sectors, ahead of IT, software and computer services (633).

The analysis confirmed the significance of arts and crafts as a production sector for the county, with 696 'makers' identified (as opposed to 10 employees in ONS!)

*Figure 2 Highlighting the important of Herefordshire's freelance creative workforce*



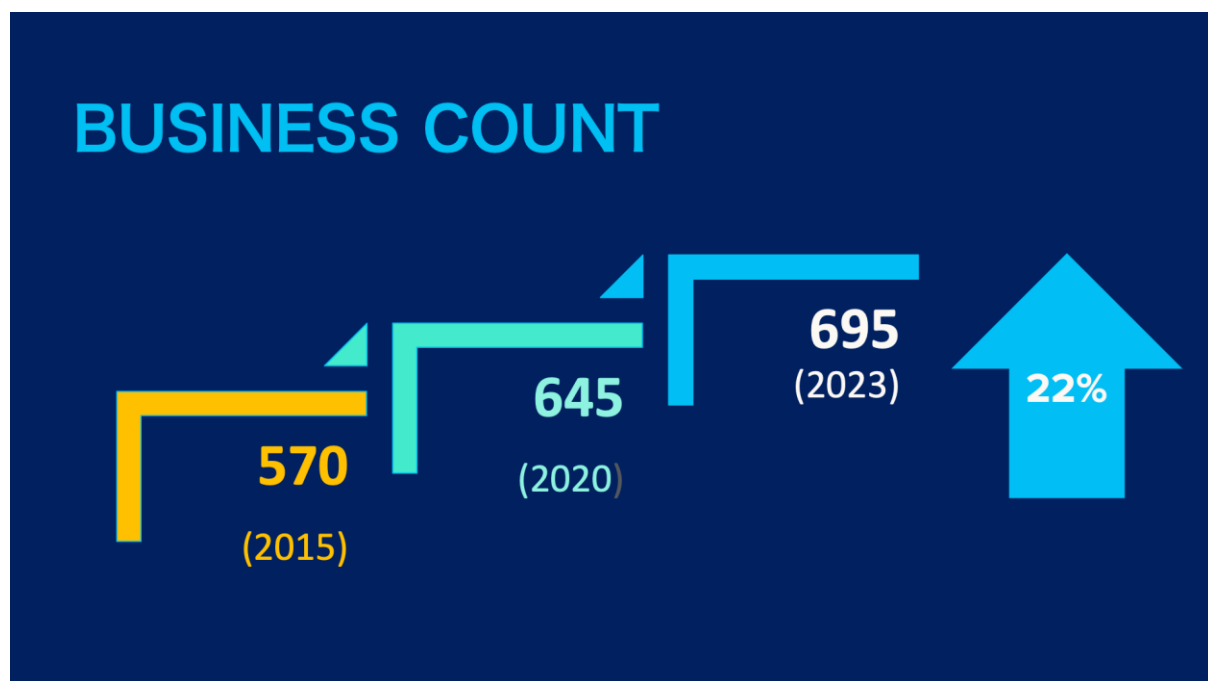
*Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of BRES and LinkedIn (2024)*

### Herefordshire's creative businesses

Analysis of the county's cultural and creative industries business sector showed similar resilience and sustained growth, growing from 570 firms in 2015 to 645 in 2020 and 695 in 2023 (the latest year for which figures were available).

IT, software and computer services again emerged as the largest sector (270 businesses), consistent with the pattern observed across the UK. Music, performing and visual arts (120) was the next largest sector. Film, TV, video, radio and photography (70) and Advertising and marketing (65) both showed steady growth without demonstrating the benefits of 'clustering.'

*Figure 3 Herefordshire registered creative business population*



*Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of Interdepartmental Business Register (from Nomisweb)*

### Clustering of cultural and creative industries businesses and employment

One of the stated goals of the cultural strategy was to increase the LQ of creative industries in Herefordshire – that is, the average density of sector businesses and employment – to the national average of 1.0 by 2029. This reflected an awareness of the benefits that increasing specialisation and knowledge exchange can bring to a creative economy which demonstrates effective clustering. However, this was always going to be a daunting target: cultural and creative industries are disproportionately aggregated in London and the South East, which are home to 60% of sector businesses and employment, so for any rural sub-sector to have an LQ of 1.0 or above represents a considerable concentration.

On the evidence of the latest available national employment statistics (BRES 2022), Herefordshire remained far from achieving these aims, with a creative industries LQ of 0.46 and no individual sub-sector having an LQ greater than 0.93 (Music, performing and visual arts). Looking at the cultural sector gave a slightly different outcome, with an LQ of 0.63 and evidence of clustering both in Heritage (170 employees, LQ of 3.17) and Cultural education (40 employees, LQ of 1.57).

Additional evidence of freelance and self-employed creative workers, drawn from LinkedIn, gave more support for the potential for a different model for rural creative industries: one built upon co-production and collaboration between companies and freelances as much as scaling individual registered businesses or geographical agglomeration. Including the freelance and self-employed creative workforce within our analysis produced much clearer evidence of the strength of both creative industries (LQ of 0.98) and the cultural sector (1.25). By this account, Crafts (including arts and crafts, jewellery designers and local specialisms such as blacksmithing) emerged as a nationally significant sub-sector, with an astonishing LQ of 54.79 – in other words, that the concentration of makers in Herefordshire was more than 50 times the national average! Other creative industries sub-sectors, including Design and designer fashion (4.89), Advertising and marketing (1.43) and Publishing (1.04), showed evidence of clustering.<sup>4</sup>

*Figure 4 Evidence of clustering in Herefordshire's cultural and creative industries sectors*



*Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of BRES (2022) and LinkedIn (2024)*

<sup>4</sup> These raw data were likely to underestimate the real scale of Herefordshire's cultural and creative workforce, where consultation confirmed that many of its members would not think of using LinkedIn to promote themselves or their businesses.



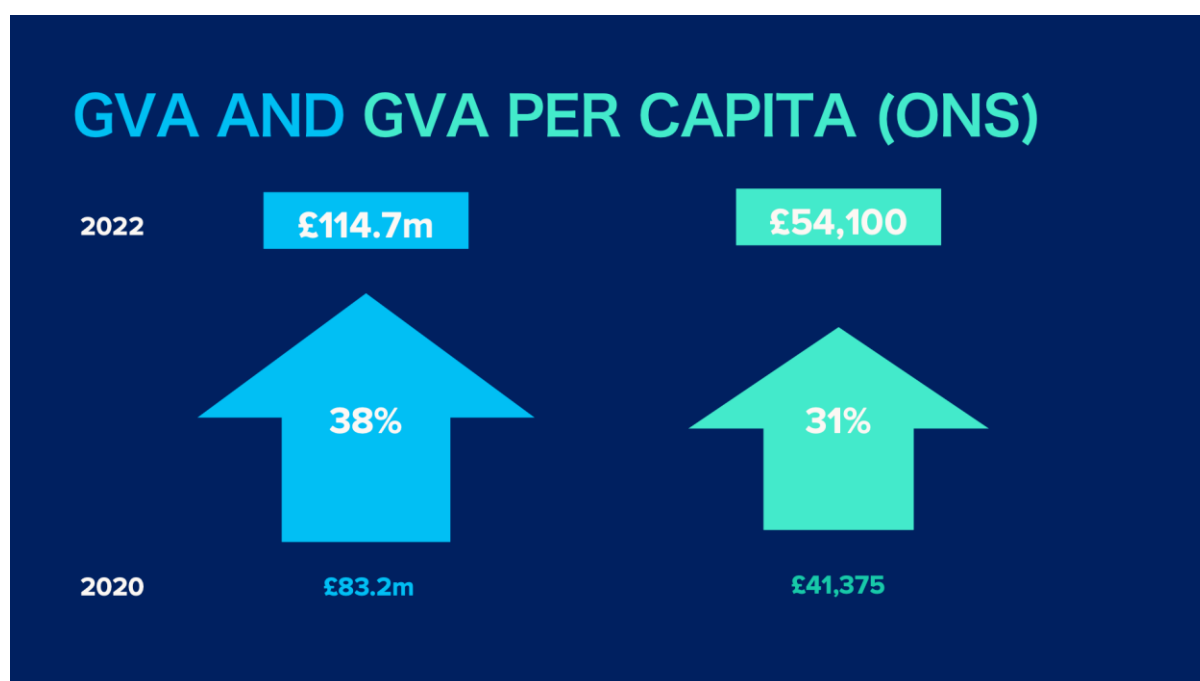


## Output of cultural and creative industries

Analysis of sector output showed a sharp increase in output of Herefordshire's cultural and creative industries, with GVA rising from £83.2 million in 2020 to £114.7m in 2022 (the last year for which full figures were available) – an increase of 38%, against growth of only 5% in the employment base.

Increased output was driven primarily by productivity growth, not by the scale of employment. GVA per capita in the sector grew by 31% in the same period, to £54,100 – nearly double the average GVA per capita for all employment in Herefordshire of £27,278.<sup>5</sup> Given that the analysis covered a period in which cultural production and consumption were severely disrupted by lockdowns, these findings are a remarkable testament to the resilience of Herefordshire's creative economy.

Figure 5 Herefordshire creative and cultural sector GVA 2022



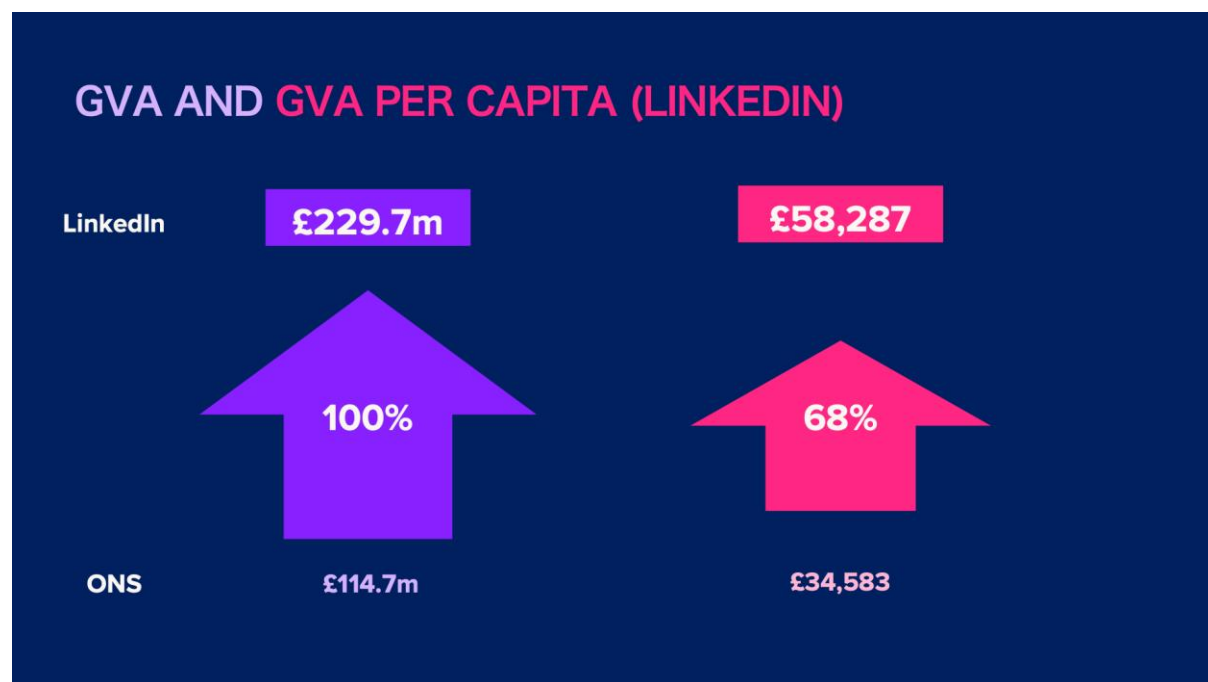
Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of ONS data: Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2022; Current Price (unsmoothed) GVA (B) per hour worked indices for West Midlands Combined Authority (2022); Current Price (unsmoothed) GVA (B) per hour worked indices for County of Herefordshire (2022); and Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: city and enterprise regions for West Midlands Combined Authority (2022).

<sup>5</sup> These figures were prepared on a conservative basis, using evidence of GVA from The Marches (the smallest economic region for which output data are broken down by SIC codes) and scaling this down to reflect Herefordshire's relatively lower levels of productivity (around 75% of the national average, compared with 86% for the West Midlands region).

## Further evidence of clustering and growth

DCMS Sector Estimates for Cultural sector and Creative Industries provide evidence of other IP-related income, such as export earnings, broken down into sub-sectors which more closely reflect output data than attribution of GVA based on wider SIC categories used in regional Current Price estimates. However, DCMS estimates are prepared only at a national level. Using LinkedIn workforce data to more accurately scale the proportion of total workforce in Herefordshire produced estimated GVA of £229.7m, double that of estimates based on ONS data on full and part time employment.

*Figure 6 Herefordshire creative and cultural GVA - including freelance workforce*



*Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of DCMS Economic Estimates (2022) and LinkedIn (2024)*

This level of analysis also more clearly demonstrated the economic contribution made by freelance and self-employed creative workers. Other independent research demonstrates that freelance and self-employed creatives may be expected to generate greater revenue than those in other occupational categories due to their higher levels of knowledge and skill. The total contribution of freelancers to the UK economy in 2022 was estimated at £139 billion.<sup>6</sup>

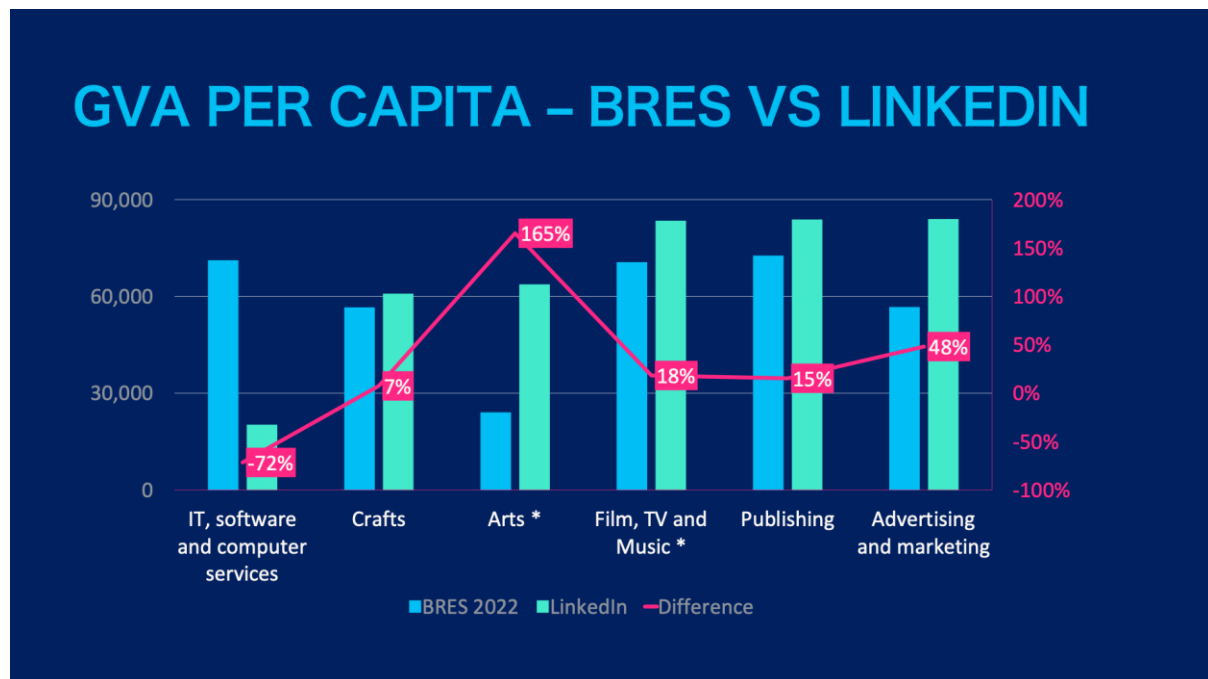
Comparing DCMS Estimates with LinkedIn data resulted in estimated average GVA per capita for Herefordshire's cultural sectors of £58,287, 68% greater than ONS estimates and 114% more than the county average for all sectors.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ipse.co.uk/policy/research/the-self-employed-landscape/self-employed-landscape-report-2022.html>

Three sub-sectors – Advertising and marketing, Film, TV and Music and Publishing – demonstrated GVA per capita of more than £83,000, three times the county average.

Figure 7 shows the comparison of GVA estimates for key cultural and creative sub-sectors using the two different methodologies:

Figure 7 Comparison of GVA per capita for Herefordshire cultural and creative sub-sectors



Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of DCMS Economic Estimates (2022) and LinkedIn (2024)

It also indicated higher levels of productivity in the cultural sector, where GVA per capita was £58,287 – 68.5% higher than suggested by analysis of ONS data alone, reflecting the relative importance of freelance working and self-employment. The DCMS cultural sector for Arts showed GVA per capita of £63,748 per annum, 265% of the ONS estimate. By the same method, three creative sub-sectors – Advertising and marketing, Film, TV and Music and Publishing – had GVA per capita of more than £83,000.

These estimates highlight that:

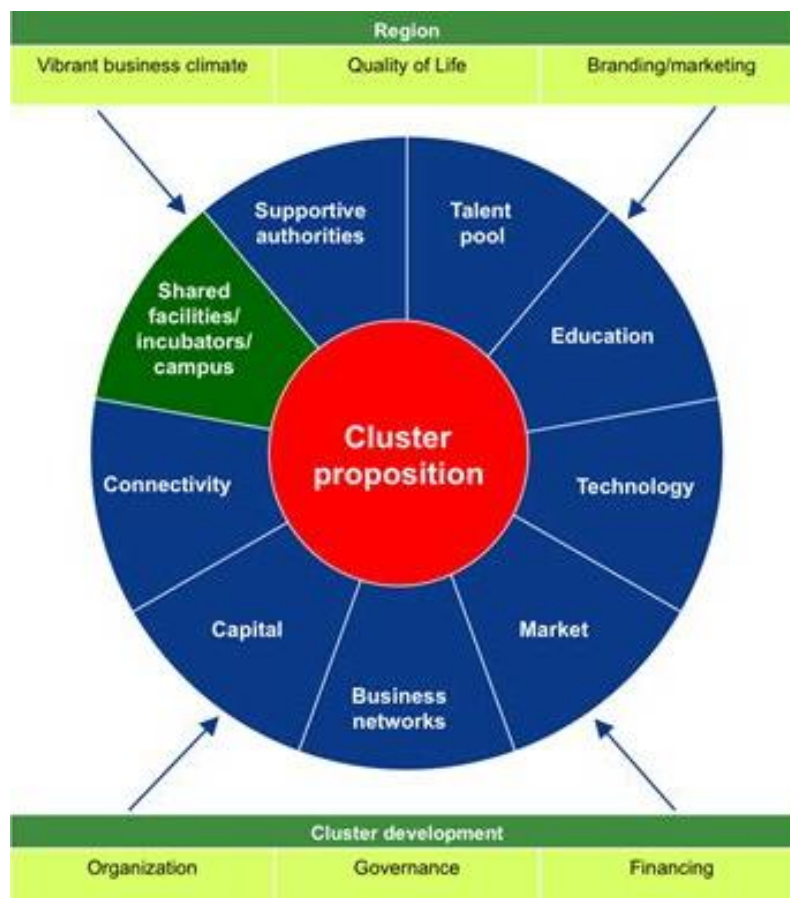
- Freelance and self-employed creatives play a critical role in the rural creative economy by enabling businesses to manage and reduce entrepreneurial risk, de-risk market uncertainties, and reduce the amount of finance required for innovation and business start-ups, ultimately promoting innovation, enterprise, and growth.
- Provision of suitable production and showcasing infrastructure within the county (frequently identified through consultation as a key need to help existing business grow and attract new talent) has the potential to amplify the returns from co-production and collaborative working.

## Relationship of clustering to productivity

Throughout this report we have used ‘clustering’ as a term to describe the concentration of creative employment and workforce across the county in relation to the national average. This reflects the fact that the economic phenomenon of clustering – and the realisation of its benefits in an increased *absorptive capacity for innovation* amongst sector actors – consists of other factors than simple physical agglomeration. These include:

- Shared facilities
- Connectivity
- Supportive authorities
- Governance
- Access to capital and finance
- Business networks
- Market opportunities
- Education
- Talent pool
- Technology
- Quality of life
- Branding and marketing
- Vibrancy of the business climate

Figure 8 Dimensions of an economic cluster



Source: BCI Global, <https://bciglobal.com/en/innovation-and-cluster-development>

Nonetheless, the relative concentration of creative workforce can be a useful indicator of productive capacity, based on the assumption that this will promote the exchange of skills and resources, shared access to market opportunities and the ability of organisations to draw on a wider pool of skilled specialists. In the context of a geographically dispersed and largely rural county, this is a more useful indicator of the capacity for innovation and growth than physical agglomeration alone.

Figure 9 shows a 'heat map' of sub-sector LQ and its relation to economic output which tends to support this assumption. The exception is the IT, computer and software sub-sector, which suggests that there are fewer firms taking advantage of opportunities in software development and creative technologies.

*Figure 9 'Heat map' of clustering in Herefordshire's cultural and creative industries sectors*

## SUB-SECTOR CLUSTERING

DCMS sub sector	LQ	GVA (£m)
Crafts	54.79	42.3
Design and designer fashion	4.89	32.8
Advertising and marketing	1.43	56.6
Publishing	1.04	26.6
Architecture	0.96	7.8
Music, performing and visual arts	0.83	19.7
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	0.70	30.8
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	0.48	0.5
IT, software and computer services	0.34	12.8



## Key Findings

### 1. Leadership and Focus

- While the cultural strategy has spurred positive activity, reflected in a steep rise in productivity across Herefordshire's creative workforce and economy, it suffers from lack of consistent focus and leadership effort.
- A disconnect between council priorities and cultural sector ambitions, with limited translation between policy goals and creative practice, constrains investment and limits potential future returns.
- Herefordshire Cultural Partnership, which should be driving implementation, lacks the capacity at the strategic level needed to effect real change.

**Recommendation:** Evolve the Cultural Partnership into a more empowered intermediary body, potentially taking account of a wider sub-regional geography, modelled on successful examples like South East Creative Economy Network<sup>7</sup>. This body should actively engage council leadership, translate between policy and practice, and drive collaborative action.

### 2. Co-production and Scale

Herefordshire's dispersed cultural ecology presents challenges for building critical mass, but also opportunities for innovative approaches. Hereford Museum's emerging co-production model offers a promising framework that could be scaled across the sector.

**Recommendation:** Establish a working group led by the Museum, involving key institutions like Hereford College of Arts and rural media organisations, to develop a county-wide co-production model. This should address how to build scale, share resources, and create pathways for talent development across dispersed communities.

### 3. Vision and Ambition

The current strategy vision, while positive, doesn't sufficiently differentiate Herefordshire or provide clear direction for action. It needs reframing to emphasise the county's unique assets and ambitions, using an appropriate register of language to reflect the distinctiveness of the cultural offer.

**Recommendation:** Revise the vision to stress Herefordshire's commitment to driving innovation in rural cultural development, leveraging its heritage and landscapes to create distinctive creative experiences and economic opportunities.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.southeastleap.com/our-network/working-groups/south-east-creative-economy-network/>

#### 4. Whole-County Approach

Although mapping identifies creative businesses, cultural organisations and a creative workforce distributed across the county, current activity is overly focused on Hereford city centre, with limited understanding of how to connect cultural development and increase specialisation and collaboration of creative industries across the wider county and region.

**Recommendation:** Commission a detailed cultural asset mapping exercise for the whole county, identifying potential clusters, collaboration opportunities, and strategies for overcoming geographic barriers. Use this to inform a "cultural geography" approach to future planning.

#### 5. Strategic Alignment

There are missed opportunities to align cultural initiatives with broader policy agendas around economic development, health and wellbeing, and education. The value proposition of culture is not consistently communicated to council stakeholders.

**Recommendation:** Develop a cross-cutting cultural policy that demonstrates clear links to council priorities. Create a **cultural value framework** that can be used to articulate benefits across diverse policy areas.

#### 6. Investment Coordination

While significant investments are being made (e.g., Museum redevelopment, public art initiatives), there was limited coordination ensure that these were linked to the development of new and sustainable production facilities to maximise their collective impact.

**Recommendation:** Establish a **Cultural Investment Board** to oversee major projects, ensure strategic alignment of place-based and sector-focused investment, and maximise spillover benefits across the county.

## Appendix 1: Supply of creative skills

This report provides an overview of provision of creative skills training in Herefordshire. It sets local skills needs and the learning landscape in the wider national context, examining funding changes, diversity issues and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities.

Recent policy changes have impacted creative and course offerings in higher and further education, with reduced funding for arts, creative and media courses and a greater focus on technical and vocational education.

The creative sector faces significant diversity challenges, with those from wealthier backgrounds more than twice as likely to secure jobs in creative occupations.

While there are pockets of good practice, CPD opportunities in the sector are often poorly matched to current and future skills needs, particularly in terms of accessibility and updated content although we understand the College of Arts is developing new CPD/short course initiatives.

This section analyses the supply of post-16 education and learning across five key creative career pathways: Creative Originals, Creative Services, Creative Experiences, Creative Content, and Digital Technology. Whilst Herefordshire has a good range of creative courses available, with 100 offerings across the five pathways, there are opportunities to support the broadening of routes into the industry through targeted initiatives. This has been highly successful in other English regions through local authority support <sup>8</sup>

New initiatives such as the NMITE Future of Work Hub and the HCA Digital Skills Centre have the potential to significantly boost local skills development but will take time to fully establish themselves. HCA is currently developing its course portfolio.

### Recommendations:

1. Foster collaboration between key learning institutions to develop a comprehensive strategy for cultivating the future skills needed in the creative and digital workforce, with a focus on tailored CPD programs and ongoing communication with employers.
2. Promote equality, diversity and inclusive growth in Herefordshire's creative sector through targeted, place-based initiatives involving the Council, education providers and industry, with particular emphasis on widening access
3. Enhance talent attraction and retention by improving communication of current and future learning and career pathways, highlighting the specific future skills that will be nurtured in the region.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/all-news-and-blogs/apply-to-the-mayors-screen-diversity-programme-beyond-bront%C3%ABs/>

Concerted efforts are needed to address skills gaps, diversity challenges and talent retention if Herefordshire's creative sector is to overcome structural and logistical barriers to growth and fulfil its promise shown. By fostering collaboration, promoting inclusion and communicating clear pathways, the county can capitalise on its unique assets and position itself as a thriving hub for creative and digital innovation.

## National context

The change in Government in July 2024 meant that, at time of writing, it was unclear where changes to creative industries and skills policy would be made. However, some trends were likely to continue to influence development of policy:

- The creative industries are a significant contributor to the UK economy, generating £108 billion annually and employing over 2.3 million people. They rank among the world's fastest-growing sectors providing high-quality employment, drive innovation, and support civic and social wellbeing. The sector has been identified as a priority for future growth by successive administrations.
- As technology increasingly infuses the creative industries, the UK Government has recognised competitive advantage in both technology and creative sectors and identified the creative industries as one of five priority sectors in the 2023 Spring Budget to deliver future growth.
- The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs 2023 report predicted that technology adoption will continue to be a major driver of business transformation over the next five years. It also stated that the fastest-growing roles relative to their size today are driven by technology, digitalisation and sustainability and that employers estimate that **44% of workers' skills will be disrupted** in the next five years. Over 85% of organisations surveyed identified increased adoption of new and frontier technologies and broadening digital access as the trends most likely to drive transformation in their organisation.

## Funding changes

Previous UK Government policy had negative impacts on the design and delivery of creative and digital courses both in higher education (HE) and further education (FE) institutions throughout England. In 2022, top-up funding for non-prioritised subjects – which include the arts, creative and media courses – was cut from £36m to £19m, with the savings being redirected to other areas such as nursing and computing. This highly criticised policy effectively meant a reduction in funding by half to arts, creative and media courses, and indicated greater focus on technical and further education.

The **Augar Review of 2018** on post-18 education and funding also highlighted the need for greater access to the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) and the need for more Higher

Level apprenticeships. It seems likely that the new government will revisit those recommendations.

The **Skills and Post-16 Education Bill** (from April 2022) aimed to,

"Embed employers in the heart of the skills system by making it a legal requirement that employers and colleges collaborate to develop skills plans so that the training on offer meets the need of local areas, and so people no longer have to leave their hometowns to find great jobs."

The Bill resulted in the creation of **Local Skills Improvement Plans** (LSIPs) which were created through involvement with employers and, most notably, the creation of new "T" levels which offer a more vocational route equivalent to three A levels. There are currently two pathways designed for the creative sector:

- Media Broadcast and Production (starting September 2024)
- Craft and Design (starting September 2024)

There are also three digital pathways (all at Level 3):

- Digital Production, Design and Development
- Digital Support Services
- Digital Business Services

The success of T levels is still being assessed but anecdotal evidence from employers in the sector is that they are not widely recognised and are difficult to engage with due to the amount of placement time needed (minimum 45 days).

In addition, there are apprenticeship pathways such as:

- Level 3 -- Advertising and Media Executive
- Level 3 -- Broadcast Production Assistant
- Level 3 -- Digital Marketer
- Level 3 -- Creative Venue Technician
- Level 4 -- Junior 2D Visual Effects
- Level 4 -- Assistant Technical Director

And at Higher level:

- Level 6 -- Digital Marketer (degree)
- Level 6 -- Broadcast and Media Systems Engineer (degree)

## Diversity

The creative sector still has serious structural, institutional and workforce diversity problems. Historic patterns of recruitment by “who you know” and a tendency amongst employers to hire people like themselves present considerable barriers to entry. Working patterns involving early starts, late finishes and ‘crunches’ to meet project deadlines place some roles out of the reach of those with caring responsibilities or without access to private transport. There is also evidence that employers are reluctant to hire “older” workers – meaning anyone over 35!<sup>9</sup>

Research from the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre shows that those from wealthier backgrounds are more than twice as likely to land a job in a creative occupation, with the issue further compounded when class is combined with gender, ethnicity, disability and skill levels. The research identified that only through,

"Significant, systemic and sustained action [can] Government, industry and educators work together to seize this moment, as we emerge from an unprecedented crisis, to address long-standing inequalities in the sector."

## CPD

Throughout the creative sector, there is a broad range of good practice in providing continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities tailored to the needs of professionals, but it exists largely in dispersed pockets and is often poorly matched, in volume and accessibility, to current and foreseeable needs for training and development. Although there are some sector-specific private training providers, they are mainly London and Southeast based.

Research by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) on CPD within higher education (HE) provision for the creative sector found that,

“Existing provision [was] inflexible in terms of content and delivery. Opportunities [were] often inadequately responsive to individual requirements, with too much material re-used from other courses (within HE) or infrequently updated.”<sup>10</sup>

## Our Findings

### Local Skills

The Local Skills Improvement Plan for Herefordshire and Worcestershire (produced by the Hereford and Worcestershire Chambers of Commerce) did not identify the creative

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-do-creative-industries-shun-workers-artists-over-45-tom-harvey-vfvif/?trackingId=RD4rH77XQyKFx2YADQzCVQ%3D%3D>

<sup>10</sup> [https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/5158/1/01\\_67.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/5158/1/01_67.pdf)



sector as a priority. However, it did prioritise the related digital sector and identified the following digital skills needs:

- More training on AI, AR/VR, robotics, sensors
- Digital marketing
- Integrated digital platforms to capture data and information in one place
- Data analysis and utilising data for performance improvement
- Software and web development
- Increased awareness and knowledge of cyber security
- Training to adapt and implement new technology

**Digital marketing** has been identified across all sectors as a skill employers think they will need over the next five years.

The report also endorses more employer involvement in learning and interactions within educational pathways:

"We will support embedding employer interactions over the course of study through, for example, work experience, visiting speakers, job shadowing, workplace visits and volunteering. Delivering these in partnership with employers is critical to providing authentic interactions with people in work and workplaces, which increases familiarity with and understanding of 'business as usual' in the workplace vs learning environment."

The LSIP data refers to 58 apprenticeships across the creative and digital sectors and a further 27 across digital. However, this apprenticeship data does not cover the Herefordshire Local Authority area.

Local policies identify the importance of retaining young people through further/higher education, skills and training, and the importance of creating high-quality, highly skilled jobs is recognised.

### **The local learning landscape**

Described as a "signature skills initiative", the **Skills Foundry** (part of the Stronger Hereford initiative) is an important realisation of the above policy, providing opportunities for individuals to develop new technical and digital skills with two initiatives that should impact positively on the growth of the future skills needed for the creative and digital sectors:

- **NMITE Future of Work Hub:** The NMITE Future of Work Skills Hub located on the Blackfriars campus in Hereford will work with individuals and businesses concentrating on immersive reality, digitalization and emerging technologies. A new six-month Innovation Support Programme for businesses, delivered in

partnership with Innovate UK, is providing businesses with 1-2-1 training and mentoring.

- **HCA School of Creative Digital Futures:** The new Digital Skills Centre offers courses such as the UAL Level 3 Diploma in Creative Media Production and Technology. There is a good emphasis on much-needed technical skills, and digital skills are used extensively in BA and MA programmes for CAD, visualisation, graphics, digital manufacture, animation, VR, AR, web design, content creation, programming etc. The Digital Skills Centre workshops and studios and performance spaces are available across all courses.

## Defining creative skills pathways

We examined the supply of education and learning for the creative sector in Herefordshire across five creative career pathways linked to industry supply chains:

- **Pathway 1: Creative Originals:** arts & crafts, fine art, apparel and fashion
- **Pathway 2: Creative Services:** marketing and advertising, photography, architecture & planning, graphic design, product design, design services
- **Pathway 3: Creative Experiences:** music, performing arts, museums and institutions, libraries
- **Pathway 4: Creative Content:** computer games, mobile games, publishing, motion pictures & film, broadcast media, animation
- **Pathway 5 Digital Creative Technologies:** computing and digital technologies, digital skills, coding, software development

Our research showed a fairly good range of creative courses available across Herefordshire. There are:

- 100 courses across all five creative pathways
- 57 academic courses
- 22 technical (vocational) pathways<sup>11</sup>

*Figure 10 Herefordshire Creative Skills Training Pathways*

PATHWAYS	CREATIVE ORIGINALS	CREATIVE SERVICES	CREATIVE EXPERIENCES	CREATIVE CONTENT	DIGITAL CREATIVE	TOTAL
ACADEMIC	21	2	19	8	7	57
TECHNICAL	3	4	11	3	1	22
APPRENTICESHIPS	0	1	0	0	0	1

<sup>11</sup> Technical (or vocational) qualifications combine practical learning mixed with classroom learning and include BTECs and HNCs. For the purposes of this work, we have included UAL qualifications<sup>11</sup> within the "technical" offer. UAL qualifications are submitted as "Alternative Academic Qualifications" (AAQs).

CPD	16	0	0	4	0	20
TOTAL	40	7	30	15	8	100

### Creative Originals

The largest supply of learning is within **Creative Originals**, making up 40% of the skills supply offer. A large proportion of these are CPD and/or short courses offered at Hereford College of the Arts which has a growing programme of such courses. For example, access courses to ceramics, creative writing, life drawing, ceramics, printmaking and screen printing. While the majority of courses on offer may be described as "recreational type" courses, recent additions include more professionally focused learning such as website building, animation and digital imagery of benefit to those working in the creative sector. In April 2024, they offered free 2-day digital "taster" sessions for school Years 10 and 11.

### Creative Experiences

The **Creative Experiences** pathway is also in good supply -- courses in performing arts, drama, music, dance etc., and there is a good range of both academic and technical pathways available.

### Digital creative technologies

There is a clear use of new digital technologies, with **Creative Content** courses at Hereford College of Art including UAL Level 2 and Level 3 in Creative Media Production and Technology using industry-standard software such as Unity. There is a clear merging of the skills between the two pathways of Creative Content and **Digital Creative Technologies**.

### Apprenticeships

Our research found no apprenticeships offered by local training providers. However, there is evidence that creative agencies are taking on apprentices from the Worcester-based training provider The Development Manager (TDM), who are offering a Level 3 Multichannel Marketer apprenticeship and Level 6 Digital Marketing Degree in partnership with Staffordshire University. A blacksmithing apprenticeship at Holme Lacy College, launched in 2021, is no longer advertised as taking candidates.

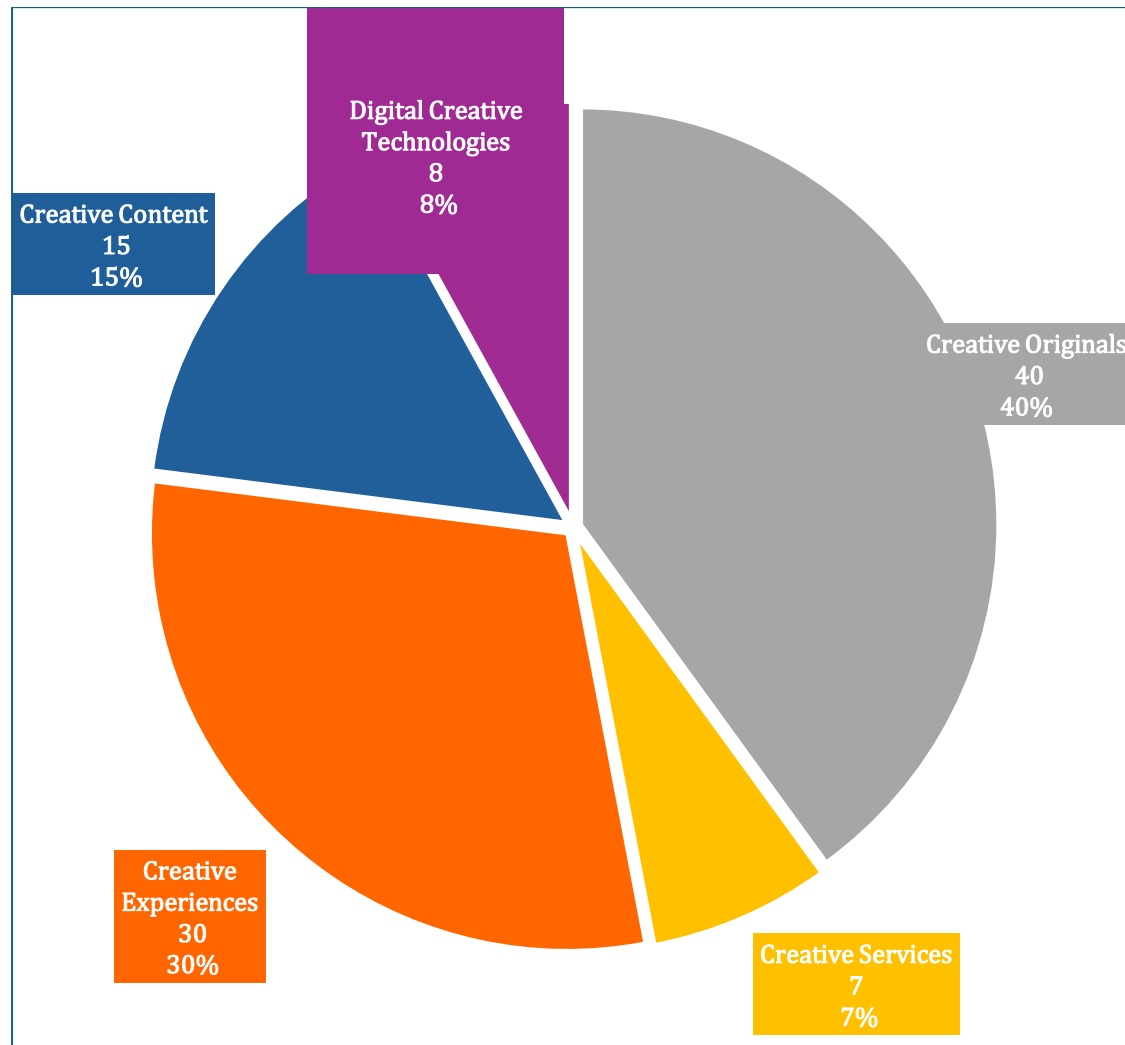
### T levels

T levels require a high level of workplace learning and related employer engagement, so they are not always an easy fit for a sector which is largely made up of freelancers or small businesses and so are not popular with either Herefordshire employers in the sector

– often small or even one-person businesses – nor with educational institutions who prefer the industry designed UAL qualifications.

We could not find a creative T level offer in Herefordshire. (Worcestershire College does offer a T level in Digital Production and Design, and there are non-creative T levels on offer at Herefordshire and Ludlow College).

*Figure 11 Proportion of courses within creative skills pathways*



## Challenges

- Although new initiatives at the Hereford College of Arts and NMITE will be enormously helpful in helping to attract and retain talent, both are relatively new and will take time to "bed in". Compared to other rural counties, these dual assets combine to present Herefordshire with a unique proposition which offers the future technical and creative skills so badly needed by employers in creative, digital and wider sectors.
- To encourage talent from a broader range of backgrounds.
- Retaining talent: the "draw" of opportunities in London and creative clusters in cities such as Bristol and Birmingham, both within daily commuting distance, is a real issue for retention of talent within Herefordshire.
- Professional development opportunities for creative workers in Herefordshire are lacking although we understand the College of Arts is in the process of developing more CPD routes aligned to the LSIP priorities and needs of the creative workforce. There is a shortage of local provision, and accessing opportunities in other places can be unaffordable for many, particularly freelance and self-employed creatives, when costs of travel and accommodation are added to time away from fee-earning work. While there is an ever-increasing availability of online learning, the volume of available learning can be confusing and sometimes expensive, especially for courses offering training in digital creative technologies.

## Recommendations

1. Support a visionary collaboration between HCA and NMITE (with emphasis on the two future skills projects) to develop a short-term and long-term strategy to cultivate the valuable "future" skills needed for the creative and digital workforce. The strategy should encompass clear deliverables around:
  - a. Developing tailored CPD programmes to support employers and employees at all levels, including managers and leaders. We understand this initiative is underway by the College of Arts which is to be welcomed
  - b. Implementing a sustainable, ongoing method of communicating with employers to assess immediate and future skills needs. It is acknowledged that many creative businesses – often individual practitioners – find it difficult to work with education so any support for current initiatives within the College ( such as industry liaison groups) could encourage further partnerships
2. Explore place-based approaches to promoting equality, diversity and inclusive growth of the creative sector in Herefordshire. This should involve the Council, education providers and industry working together to identify specific initiatives



and areas of support. In particular, focus on widening routes into the industry by developing and promoting better apprenticeship and T level opportunities.

3. Attract and retain talent through improved communication of current and future learning and career pathways. Develop a targeted marketing strategy that highlights clear routes for progression in creative and digital careers, with emphasis on the specific future skills that will be nurtured.

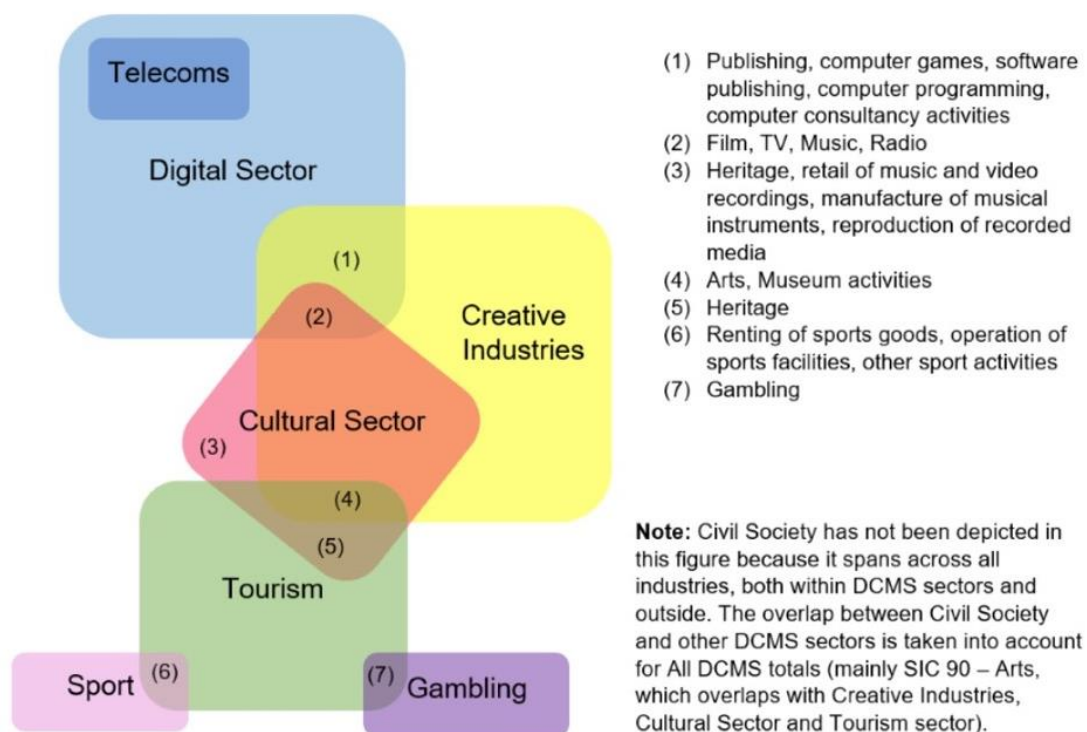
## Appendix 2: Scale and significance of Herefordshire's Cultural and Creative Industries

### Methodology

DCMS uses sub-sector definitions based on Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC codes) to determine and analysis the composition of cultural sectors and the creative industries in the UK. The definitions of creative industries and cultural sectors overlap, as shown in

Figure 12:

Figure 12 DCMS definitions of creative industries and cultural sectors



Source: DCMS Creative Industries Economic Estimates

For this study, we focused on the creative industries and cultural sector, in which there is a significant overlap of the workforce. The exceptions are in operation of heritage sites and a small element of music-related manufacturing and retail, which typically account for less than 10% of the total CCI workforce. Similarly, there is a significant overlap between creative industries and digital sectors, which includes computer games and software development and publishing and a significant population of computer consultants. The remainder of the digital sector involves elements of digital manufacturing, telecoms and other infrastructure (e.g., operation of data centres) which lie outside the creative industries.

The results of our mapping are represented below in a series of tables which show:

- Combined scale and output of the combined CCI sectors
- Scale and output of the creative industries only
- Scale and output of the cultural sector only

We compared ONS data for 2020 and 2022 (the latest publicly available data) to show evolution of workforce and businesses and added analysis of workforce (through LinkedIn) to highlight the contribution of freelance and self-employed to Herefordshire's creative economy.

### GVA (2022)

Analysis of employment data showed a sharp rise in output and productivity (measured in GVA per capita) between 2020 and 2022. With that, the creative industries sector was much more productive than the cultural sector.

*Table 1 Herefordshire Cultural and Creative Industries GVA 2022*

<b>Cultural and Creative Industries (Total)</b>	<b>Sector employment (BRES 2022)</b>	<b>Sector GVA 2022 (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita 2022 (£)</b>
Herefordshire 2022	2,120	114.7	54,101

*Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of ONS data from: BRES 2022, Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by city region (release date 17 June 2024) and Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: city and enterprise regions (release date 24 June 2024)*

Table 2 Herefordshire Creative Industries GVA 2022

<b>Creative Industries</b>	<b>Sector employment (BRES 2022)</b>	<b>Sector GVA 2022 (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita 2022 (£)</b>
Advertising and marketing	100	5.7	56,686
Architecture	240	7.9	33,089
Crafts	10	0.6	56,605
Design and designer fashion	70	6.1	87,130
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	135	9.9	73,548
IT, software and computer services	860	61.2	71,186
Publishing	110	8.0	72,636
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	105	2.5	24,042
Music, performing and visual arts	315	8.1	25,855
<b>Total (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>110.1</b>	<b>56,598</b>

Source: *The Fifth Sector (ibid)*

Table 3 Herefordshire Cultural sector GVA 2022

Cultural sector	Sector employment (BRES 2022)	Sector GVA 2022 (£m)	Sector GVA per capita 2022 (£)
Arts	270	6.5	24,042
Crafts	10	0.6	56,605
Film, TV and Music	120	8.5	70,579
Radio	0	-	-
Photography	20	1.7	87,130
Museums and Galleries	40	1.0	24,042
Libraries and archives	65	1.6	24,042
Cultural Education	40	1.5	38,432
Heritage	170	4.1	24,042
<b>Total (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>34,583</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)

## GVA (2020)

Table 4 Herefordshire Cultural and Creative Industries GVA 2020

<b>Cultural and Creative Industries (Total)</b>	<b>Sector employment (BRES 2020)</b>	<b>Sector GVA 2020 (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita 2020 (£)</b>
Herefordshire 2020	2,010	83.2	41,378

Source: *The Fifth Sector (ibid)*

Table 5 Herefordshire Creative Industries GVA 2020

<b>Creative Industries</b>	<b>Sector employment (BRES 2020)</b>	<b>Sector GVA 2020 (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita 2020 (£)</b>
Advertising and marketing	195	7.7	39,254
Architecture	265	4.4	16,720
Crafts (Creative Industries)	5	0.2	48,904
Design and designer fashion	70	2.8	40,596
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	160	9.1	57,060
IT, software and computer services	675	39.7	58,763
Publishing	220	12.8	58,350
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	100	1.1	11,430
Music, performing and visual arts	205	3.7	17,807
<b>Total (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>1,895</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>43,059</b>

Source: *The Fifth Sector (ibid)*

Table 6 Herefordshire Cultural sector GVA 2020

<b>Cultural sector</b>	<b>Sector employment (BRES 2020)</b>	<b>Sector GVA 2020 (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita 2020 (£)</b>
Arts	150	1.7	11,430
Crafts (Culture)	5	0.2	48,904
Film, TV and Music	160	9.1	56,926
Radio	0	-	-
Photography	15	0.6	40,596
Museums and Galleries	35	0.4	11,430
Libraries and archives	65	0.7	11,430
Cultural Education	45	1.3	29,963
Heritage	110	1.3	11,430
<b>Total (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>26,367</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)

### Change in GVA, 2020-2022

Table 7 Change in Herefordshire Cultural and Creative Industries employment and GVA, 2020-22

<b>Change in Cultural and Creative Industries employment and GVA</b>	<b>Sector employment (BRES 2020)</b>	<b>Sector GVA 2020 (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita 2020 (£)</b>
Herefordshire 2020-22	110	31.5	12,723

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)



Table 8 Change in Herefordshire Creative Industries employment and GVA, 2020-22

	Change 2020-2022		
<b>Creative Industries</b>	<b>Sector employment</b>	<b>Sector GVA (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita (£)</b>
Advertising and marketing	-95	(2.0)	17,431
Architecture	-25	3.5	16,370
Crafts (Creative Industries)	5	0.3	7,701
Design and designer fashion	0	3.3	46,534
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	-25	0.8	16,489
IT, software and computer services	185	21.6	12,424
Publishing	-110	(4.8)	14,286
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	5	1.4	12,612
Music, performing and visual arts	110	4.5	8,047
<b>Total (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>13,539</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)

Table 9 Change in Herefordshire Cultural sector employment and GVA, 2020-22

	Change 2020-2022		
Cultural sector	Sector employment	Sector GVA (£m)	Sector GVA per capita (£)
Arts	120	4.8	12,612
Crafts (Culture)	5	0.3	7,701
Film, TV and Music	-40	(0.6)	13,652
Radio	0	-	-
Photography	5	1.1	46,534
Museums and Galleries	5	0.6	12,612
Libraries and archives	0	0.8	12,612
Cultural Education	-5	0.2	8,470
Heritage	60	2.8	24,042
<b>Total (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>8,216</b>

Source: *The Fifth Sector (ibid)*

## Percentage change in GVA, 2020-2022

Table 10 Percentage change in Cultural and Creative employment and GVA, 2020-22

Percentage change in Cultural and Creative Industries employment and GVA	Sector employment (BRES 2020)	Sector GVA 2020 (£m)	Sector GVA per capita 2020 (£)
Herefordshire 2020-22	5%	38%	31%

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)

Table 11 Percentage change in Creative Industries employment and GVA, 2020-22

	Percentage change 2020-2022		
Creative Industries	Sector employment (%)	Sector GVA (%)	Sector GVA per capita (%)
Advertising and marketing	-49%	-26%	44%
Architecture	-9%	79%	98%
Crafts (Creative Industries)	100%	131%	16%
Design and designer fashion	0%	115%	115%
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	-16%	9%	29%
IT, software and computer services	27%	54%	21%
Publishing	-50%	-38%	24%
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	5%	121%	110%
Music, performing and visual arts	54%	123%	45%
<b>Total (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>31%</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)

Table 12 Percentage change in Cultural sector employment and GVA, 2020-22

Cultural sector	Percentage change 2020-2022		
	Sector employment (%)	Sector GVA (%)	Sector GVA per capita (%)
Arts	80%	279%	110%
Crafts (Culture)	100%	131%	16%
Film, TV and Music	-25%	-7%	24%
Radio	0%	0%	0%
Photography	33%	186%	115%
Museums and Galleries	14%	140%	110%
Libraries and archives	0%	110%	110%
Cultural Education	-11%	14%	28%
Heritage	55%	225%	110%
<b>Total (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>31%</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)

## Cultural and Creative Industries LQ, 2022

Table 13 Herefordshire Creative Industries LQ, 2022

Creative Industries	Sector employment (BRES 2022)	LQ
Advertising and marketing	100	0.21
Architecture	240	0.86
Crafts	10	0.79
Design and designer fashion	70	0.46
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	135	0.23
IT, software and computer services	860	0.46
Publishing	110	0.36
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	105	0.62
Music, performing and visual arts	315	0.93
<b>Total (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>0.46</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of ONS data from BRES 2022 and DCMS Economic Estimates

Table 14 Herefordshire Cultural sector LQ, 2022

Cultural sector	Sector employment (BRES 2022)	LQ
Arts	270	0.86
Crafts	10	0.79
Film, TV and Music	120	0.23
Radio	0	0.00
Photography	20	0.43
Museums and Galleries	40	0.47
Libraries and archives	65	0.77
Cultural Education	40	1.57
Heritage	170	3.17
<b>Total (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>0.63</b>

*Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)*

## Impact of including freelance and self-employed creatives

Table 15 Herefordshire Creative Industries GVA and LQ, LinkedIn 2024

Creative Industries	Workforce LinkedIn 2024	LQ	GVA (£m)	GVA per capita (£)
Advertising and marketing	674	1.43	56.6	83,964
Architecture	268	0.96	7.8	29,142
Crafts	696	54.79	42.3	60,840
Design and designer fashion	739	4.89	32.8	44,419
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	411	0.70	30.8	74,838
IT, software and computer services	633	0.34	12.8	20,249
Publishing	317	1.04	26.6	83,805
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	81	0.48	0.5	6,326
Music, performing and visual arts	281	0.83	19.7	70,148
<b>Total (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>4,100</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>229.9</b>	<b>56,082</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of LinkedIn (January 2024) and DCMS Economic Estimates (2022)



Table 16 Herefordshire Cultural sector GVA and LQ, LinkedIn 2024

Cultural sector	Workforce LinkedIn 2024	LQ	GVA (£m)	GVA per capita (£)
Arts	281	0.90	17.9	63,748
Crafts (Culture)	696	54.79	42.3	60,840
Film, TV and Music	198	0.38	16.5	83,475
Radio	-	-	-	-
Photography	213	4.57	7.9	37,069
Museums and Galleries	59	0.70	0.9	15,560
Libraries and archives	22	0.26	0.0	1,071
Cultural Education	-	0.00	-	-
Heritage		0.00	-	-
<b>Total (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>1,469</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>85.6</b>	<b>58,287</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector, ibid

Comparing analysis of LinkedIn and BRES showed that GVA per capita was consistent across both measures for the creative industries.

*Table 17 Difference in Creative Industries GVA and LQ between LinkedIn and BRES 2022*

<b>Creative Industries</b>	<b>Increase in Sector workforce</b>	<b>Increase in Sector GVA (£m)</b>	<b>Increase in Sector GVA per capita (£)</b>
Advertising and marketing	574	50.9	27,278
Architecture	28	-0.1	-3,947
Crafts (Creative Industries)	686	41.8	4,235
Design and designer fashion	669	26.7	-42,711
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	276	20.8	1,290
IT, software and computer services	-227	-48.4	-50,938
Publishing	207	18.6	11,169
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	-24	-2.0	-17,716
Music, performing and visual arts	-34	11.6	44,293
<b>Difference (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>2,155</b>	<b>119.9</b>	<b>(516)</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector, ibid

The introduction of the freelance and self-employed workforce in the cultural sector had marked and contradictory impacts on individual productivity:

- Arts sub-sector GVA per capita *grew* by nearly £40,000, reflecting benefits of co-production and collaboration with skilled freelance and self-employed specialist producers
- GVA per capita *fell* in sub-sectors with a more individual mode of production (Photography and Cultural education)
- The fall in total output and GVA per capita in sub-sectors with a higher degree of control by public sector bodies, charities or trusts (Museums and Galleries, Libraries and Archives, Heritage) is a statistical outlier – it is more a reflection of the underrepresentation of that workforce on LinkedIn than an actual drop in output and productivity in the cultural economy.

*Table 18 Difference in Cultural sector GVA and LQ between LinkedIn and BRES 2022*

<b>Cultural sector</b>	<b>Increase in Sector workforce</b>	<b>Increase in Sector GVA (£m)</b>	<b>Increase in Sector GVA per capita (£)</b>
Arts	11	11.4	39,705
Crafts (Culture)	686	41.8	4,235
Film, TV and Music	78	8.1	12,896
Radio	-	-	-
Photography	193	6.2	-50,060
Museums and Galleries	19	0.0	-8,482
Libraries and archives	-43	-1.5	-22,972
Cultural Education	-40	-1.5	-38,432
Heritage	-170	-4.1	-24,042
<b>Difference (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>60.2</b>	<b>23,704</b>

*Source: The Fifth Sector, ibid*

Table 19 Percentage difference in Creative Industries GVA and LQ between LinkedIn and BRES 2022

<b>Creative Industries</b>	<b>Sector workforce</b>	<b>Sector GVA (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita (£)</b>
Advertising and marketing	574%	898%	48%
Architecture	12%	-2%	-12%
Crafts (Creative Industries)	6860%	7381%	7%
Design and designer fashion	956%	438%	-49%
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	204%	210%	2%
IT, software and computer services	-26%	-79%	-72%
Publishing	188%	232%	15%
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	-23%	-80%	-74%
Music, performing and visual arts	-11%	142%	171%
<b>Difference (Creative Industries)</b>	<b>111%</b>	<b>109%</b>	<b>-1%</b>

Source: The Fifth Sector, ibid

Table 20 Percentage difference in Cultural sector GVA and LQ between LinkedIn and BRES 2022

<b>Cultural sector</b>	<b>Sector workforce</b>	<b>Sector GVA (£m)</b>	<b>Sector GVA per capita (£)</b>
Arts	4%	176%	165%
Crafts (Culture)	6860%	7381%	7%
Film, TV and Music	65%	95%	18%
Radio	-	-	-
Photography	965%	353%	-57%
Museums and Galleries	48%	-5%	-35%
Libraries and archives	-66%	-98%	-96%
Cultural Education	-100%	-100%	-
Heritage	-100%	-100%	-
<b>Difference (Cultural sector)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>237%</b>	<b>69%</b>

Source: *The Fifth Sector, ibid*

## Evolution of Herefordshire Cultural and Creative Industries businesses

*Table 21 Count of Herefordshire Creative Industries businesses*

<b>Creative industries</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2023</b>
Advertising and marketing	45	50	65
Architecture	45	45	50
Crafts	5	0	5
Design and designer fashion	50	50	60
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	50	70	70
IT, software and computer services	225	260	270
Publishing	40	50	45
Museums, libraries and galleries	15	10	10
Music, performing and visual arts	85	100	120
<b>Total Creative industries businesses</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>695</b>

*Source: The Fifth Sector analysis of ONS Interdepartmental Business Review (IDBR)*

*Table 22 Count of Herefordshire Cultural sector businesses*

<b>Cultural sector</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2023</b>
Arts	70	80	95
Crafts	5	0	5
Film, TV and Music	55	50	70
Radio	0	0	0
Photography	20	20	10
Museums and Galleries	5	5	5
Libraries and archives	10	5	5
Cultural Education	5	10	15
Heritage	5	5	5
<b>Total Cultural sector businesses</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>210</b>

*Source: The Fifth Sector (ibid)*



### Appendix 3: Stakeholder engagement and consultation

Stakeholder consultation was designed to generate qualitative insights and provide assurance of both findings from quantitative research and our analysis, assumptions and recommendations.

Consultation took place through a mix of individual interviews with representatives of both the sector and public authorities and in-person and online forums.

This provided valuable insights from:

- Herefordshire Cultural Partnership
- Hereford College of Arts
- Herefordshire BID
- Herefordshire Visitor Economy Plan Network
- Herefordshire Council representatives, including:
  - Director of Economy and Growth
  - Director of Museums
  - Head of Economy and Regeneration
  - Service Director, Communities
  - Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing
- Herefordshire Business Board
- Hereford Make CIC
- Rural Media
- Ledbury Poetry
- Meadow Arts
- Arts Alive
- Hay Castle Trust
- Mountain Perspectives
- NMITE
- Bloom.Space



# Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2025-2030

## Executive Summary

Herefordshire stands at a pivotal moment in its cultural development. Building on five years of significant progress toward achieving the aims of the previous cultural strategy, led by the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership (HCP), the revised strategy sets out an ambitious yet practical vision for how culture can drive economic growth, enhance wellbeing, and strengthen communities across our distinctively rural county.

This strategy has been developed by the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership in collaboration with Herefordshire Council and a wide range of stakeholders. It builds on the achievements of the 2019-2024 Cultural Strategy while responding to the changing context for cultural development locally, regionally, and nationally.

## The Rural Context: Challenges and Opportunities

Herefordshire's rurality presents both unique challenges and distinctive opportunities for cultural development:

- **Geographic Dispersion:** As one of England's most sparsely populated counties, Herefordshire faces significant challenges in cultural provision, with communities separated by considerable distances and limited public transport
- **Seasonal Disruption:** Environmental factors, including flooding, regularly impact cultural participation and delivery, requiring adaptive approaches to programming and engagement
- **Digital Connectivity:** Variable broadband access creates barriers to digital cultural engagement in rural areas, while also offering opportunities for innovative solutions
- **Community Assets:** Market towns and villages maintain strong local identities and community spaces that can serve as cultural hubs when properly supported
- **Natural and Historic Environment:** Herefordshire's outstanding landscape and cultural heritage provides both inspiration and settings for distinctive cultural experiences that cannot be replicated elsewhere

These rural characteristics demand bespoke approaches to cultural development that conventional urban-focused strategies cannot address.

## The Opportunity

Herefordshire's cultural sector represents a vital economic and social asset. Our research reveals:

- **Economic Impact:** The creative and cultural sector comprises 800 registered businesses, alongside a substantial creative workforce estimated at 4,500, some 2.5 times that reported

in official employment statistics, reflecting the prevalence of freelance working. Research suggests GVA per capita in the sector is twice the average for the county.

- **Cultural Assets:** A rich ecosystem of cultural organisations, from the new Museum of Hereford to internationally recognised festivals to community-led initiatives, spanning urban and rural settings
- **Growth Potential:** Significant opportunities to enhance Herefordshire's reputation as a destination for cultural tourism, creative business, and cultural participation
- **Social Value:** Culture's proven contribution to health and wellbeing, community cohesion, and quality of life across the county

## Partnership Leadership

Joint working between Herefordshire County Council and Herefordshire Cultural Partnership has demonstrated effective leadership for the sector and county as a whole:

- **Securing Major Investment:** the Council's commitment of £8.5 million toward the complete refurbishment of Hereford Museum and Art Gallery in Broad Street, and the relocation of Hereford Library to Shirehall, levered in additional £8 million planned from the Stronger Towns fund, £5 million from National Lottery Heritage Fund and 750k from Arts Council England. HCP led a successful partnership bid for £730k from Arts Council England, Government UKSPF funding, Herefordshire Council and local fundraising for the groundbreaking Our Place creative health programme, demonstrating the Partnership's capacity to attract significant external funding
- **Coordinating Business Support:** the Council used UKSPF funding to deliver targeted support for creative businesses through Mountain Perspective, helping over 120 creative enterprises develop sustainable business models
- **Enabling Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Bringing together cultural organisations, health providers, educational institutions, and community groups to address shared challenges
- **Developing Rural Models:** Pioneering approaches to cultural delivery that respond to Herefordshire's rural context, creating replicable models for other rural areas
- **Advocating for the Sector:** Providing a unified voice for culture in strategic conversations about Herefordshire's future through The Shire website and networking events such as The Herd

This sector-led, partnership-based approach has proven more effective than traditional 'top down' sector support models, allowing for greater agility, broader engagement, and more diverse funding streams.

## Strategic Approach

Our approach is guided by a **Pro-Herefordshire Mindset** that celebrates our county's distinctive rural character while addressing its unique challenges. This philosophy underpins five interconnected priorities:

1. **Children and Young People:** Developing creative skills and career pathways that reflect the realities of Herefordshire's rural creative economy, focusing on portfolio careers and entrepreneurship
2. **Creative Economy:** Supporting creative businesses to grow sustainably through targeted business support, collaborative approaches to skills and talent development, and innovative workspace solutions that overcome rural isolation
3. **Cultural Democracy:** Ensuring all communities can shape and access cultural opportunities through co-creation, community ownership, and addressing rural access challenges
4. **Cultural Tourism:** Positioning Herefordshire as a distinctive rural cultural and heritage destination through coordinated marketing, digital innovation, and development of the festivals and events offer
5. **Creative Health:** Pioneering culturally led approaches to wellbeing that build on Our Place's success in working with communities in Golden Valley, Leominster and South Wye to address health priorities through creative engagement in widely varying rural, market town and peri-urban settings

## Implementation Framework

The strategy will be delivered through a partnership approach that recognises the complementary roles of:

- **Herefordshire Cultural Partnership:** Providing strategic leadership, facilitating collaboration, and advocating for the sector
- **Herefordshire Council:** Supporting cultural development through policy alignment, enabling access to spaces, and strategic investment
- **Cultural Organisations:** Delivering high-quality cultural experiences, engaging diverse communities, and developing talent
- **Community Partners:** Ensuring cultural provision responds to local needs and opportunities

## Measuring Success

By 2030, successful implementation of this strategy will deliver:

- Increased participation in cultural activities across all communities, with particular focus on underserved rural areas

- Growth in creative employment and business sustainability across the county
- Enhanced reputation of Herefordshire as a distinctive rural cultural destination
- Improved wellbeing outcomes through creative health initiatives that address rural isolation
- Stronger, more resilient cultural organisations, creative businesses, sole traders and infrastructure that can withstand external, seasonal and geographic challenges

## Call to Action

This strategy represents a shared commitment to Herefordshire's cultural future. It calls for:

- **Investment:** Strategic funding to support implementation of key actions that address rural challenges
- **Collaboration:** Enhanced partnership working across sectors and geographic boundaries
- **Innovation:** New approaches to addressing the unique challenges of rural cultural participation and provision
- **Advocacy:** Championing the value of culture to Herefordshire's economic and social wellbeing

By working together to implement this strategy, we can ensure that culture continues to thrive at the heart of Herefordshire's communities, economy, and identity, creating a model for rural cultural development that can inspire other areas facing similar challenges.



# Title of report: Work programme 2025-2026

**Meeting: Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: 3 June 2025**

**Report by: Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

All Wards

## **Purpose**

To consider the draft work programme for the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee until September 2025.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- a) The committee agree the draft work programme for Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee contained in the work programme report attached as appendix 1, which will be subject to monthly review, as the basis of their primary focus for the remainder of the municipal year.**
- b) The committee note the forward plan attached as appendix 2 and identify any opportunities for collaboration or alignment of work.**

## **Alternative options**

- 1. The committee could decline to agree a work programme for its future committee meetings. This would likely result in unstructured and purposeless meetings.
- 2. The committee could also decline to identify areas of potential collaboration or alignment of work with other committees. This could result in duplication or overlap of work.



## Key considerations

3. A fundamental part of good scrutiny is planning and agreeing a programme of work for the committee to undertake. A well-considered work programme:
  - a. identifies priorities for the committee's work that align with corporate and partnership priorities, as well as reflecting community concern;
  - b. ensures that each identified topic has clear objectives that focus the committee's work;
  - c. creates a timetable for the committee's programme of work so that the committee carry out its work at the optimal time; and
  - d. provides officers and partners with requirements for evidence that will support the committee in providing evidence-based scrutiny.
4. To prepare this work programme, the committee chair meets regularly with the relevant corporate director and with officers of the council to identify potential priority areas of work for the committee. These priority areas are agreed by the committee and have been scheduled within the work programme to ensure the committee considers topics when it is most useful to do so. A draft of this work programme has then been circulated to the council's corporate leadership team and other key senior directors, for further comment and refinement.
5. Herefordshire Council has undertaken a review of its scrutiny function, resulting in a number of recommendations to develop the service. Fundamental to the review was a recommendation that committees reconsider their work programmes, considering different ways of carrying out their work in addition to formal committee meetings. It is proposed to bring a fresh committee work programme for the 2025-2026 municipal year to the next meeting of the committee.
6. Attached as Appendix 2 to this report is the council's most recently published forward plan of key decisions.

## Community impact

7. Effective scrutiny enables the committee to reflect community concern, one of the four purposes of scrutiny as outlined by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

## Environmental impact

8. This report contains no direct environmental impacts. However the work that the committee will undertake resulting from agreeing this work programme may have direct impacts. Reports arising from or supporting this work will outline their potential environmental impact.

## Equality duty

9. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. This report contains no direct equality impacts. However the reports and issues that the committee will consider may have direct impacts. Reports arising from or supporting this work will outline the any associated equality impacts for committee consideration.

## Resource implications

10. This report constitutes part of the typical function of this committee. Similarly, a programme of work undertaken by committee is an integral part of the council's 'business as usual'. There is no resource implication in setting or agreeing a work programme. However agreed topics in the

work programme, in particular any requests for bespoke research or the involvement of outside experts or community groups, may incur resource costs. These will be contained in any reporting or planning of agreed topics within this work programme.

### **Legal implications**

11. The remit of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 3 section 4 of the constitution and the role of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 2 article 6 of the constitution.
12. The Local Government Act 2000 requires the council to deliver the scrutiny function.

### **Risk management**

13. There are no risks identified in the committee agreeing an effective and timely programme of work. However there is a risk to the council's reputation if committees fail to set a work programme, or set a programme of work that does not address local authority, partnership or community priorities.

### **Consultees**

14. In drafting this work programme, consideration has been given to:
  - a. The recent review of the scrutiny function at Herefordshire Council;
  - b. The previous work of scrutiny committees;
  - c. Priorities suggested by members of the committee; and
  - d. Work with Herefordshire Council officers to develop topics and agree optimum timings to bring items for consideration.
15. This work programme is subject to ongoing review, which may involve additional consultees.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee work programme 2025-2026

Appendix 2 – Herefordshire Council Forward Plan 23 May 2025

### **Background papers**

None





## SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025

**May 2025**

Below are the work programmes of Herefordshire Council's five scrutiny committees.

Work programmes are subject to change, with revised programmes agreed at the end of formal committee meetings.

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# Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee

## Committee Meeting

3 June 2025 **report deadline 22 May 2025** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 28 May 2025 (provisional)

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Cultural Strategy 2019-2029</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise the extent to which the objectives of the existing cultural strategy were achieved</li> <li>Examine the relationship between the cultural strategy and the draft local plan</li> <li>Review the draft cultural strategy and its relationship with the DBID and Visit Herefordshire</li> <li>Scrutinise delivery of proposed cultural developments, such as Hereford Shire Hall and Hereford Museum.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to integrate the county's heritage assets into cultural strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft cultural strategy</li> <li>Events and festivals market report</li> <li>Visit to cultural partnership board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Culture and Leisure Lead</b></li> <li>Hereford Voice</li> <li>Chief Executive, Courtyard Hereford</li> <li>Lead officer – Hereford Museum</li> <li>Chair, Hereford Cultural Partnership</li> <li>Ian Kerry – Arts Alive</li> </ul>
<b>Local Transport Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise findings of public consultation on Local Transport Plan proposals.</li> <li>Review draft plan before Council approval.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Local Transport Plan</li> <li>Plan consultation findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Interim Chief Operating Officer</b></li> <li>Head of Transport and Access Services</li> <li>Members of Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee</li> <li>Network Rail</li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

## Committee Meeting

8 July 2025 **report deadline 26 June 2025** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Tourism and Destination Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the opportunity and value in developing a tourism strategy for Herefordshire</li> <li>Examine tourism strategies in similar local authorities</li> <li>Examine the role of cultural and heritage strategy in supporting development of tourism throughout the county.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> <li>Meeting with Herefordshire Business Improvement District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Culture and Leisure Lead</b></li> <li>DBID</li> <li>Tourism and destination management service</li> </ul>
<b>Gully cleansing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise progress against the October 2024 Council motion to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all drains, gullies and culverts that fall under the responsibility of Herefordshire Council are accurately mapped.</li> <li>Undertake an urgent programme of rectifying and repairing drains, gullies and culverts where they have been damaged by the recent unprecedented period of rainfall.</li> <li>Develop a full countywide maintenance schedule that anticipates the likelihood of heavier rainfall in the future.</li> <li>Publish the maintenance schedule so that ward members, city, town and parish councils and local people can have confidence in the plans.</li> <li>Ensure that areas most at risk of flooding are prioritised for maintenance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> <li>Site visit – mapping software demonstration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Head of Highways and Traffic</b></li> <li>Nominated parish lengthsman</li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

## Committee Meeting

9 September 2025 **report deadline 28 August 2025** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Hereford City Masterplan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives to be agreed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Service Director, Growth</b></li> </ul>
<b>UK Shared Prosperity Fund</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives to be agreed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees to be agreed</li> </ul>
<b>Broadband</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives to be agreed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendees to be agreed</li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

\*The Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, Cabinet Member, Economy and Growth, Cabinet Member, Community Services and Assets, Cabinet Member, Roads and Regulatory Services, and Cabinet Member, Transport and Infrastructure, all have a standing invitation to the meeting.

# HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN



This document, known as the Forward Plan, sets out the decisions which are expected to be taken during the period covered by the Plan by either Cabinet as a whole, or by individual Cabinet Members. The Plan is updated regularly and is available on the Herefordshire Council website ([www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk)) and from Council Offices. This edition supersedes all previous editions.

The council must give at least 28 days' notice of key decisions to be taken. A key decision is one which results in the council incurring expenditure or making savings of £500,000 or more, and/or is likely to be significant in terms of the strategic nature of the decision or its impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the council to a significant number of people living or working in the locality affected.

**Current cabinet members are listed below.** For more information and links papers for Cabinet meetings please visit <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251>

Councillor Jonathan Lester	Corporate Strategy and Budget (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst	Environment (Deputy Leader of the Council)
Councillor Carole Gandy	Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Ivan Powell	Children and Young People
Councillor Harry Bramer	Community Services and Assets
Councillor Graham Biggs	Economy and Growth
Councillor Pete Stoddart	Finance and Corporate Services
Councillor Barry Durkin	Roads and Regulatory Services
Councillor Philip Price	Transport and Infrastructure

Documents submitted in relation to each decision will be a formal report, which may include one or more appendices. Reports will usually be made available on the council website at least 5 clear working days before the date of the decision. Occasionally it will be necessary to exempt part or all of a decision report from publication due to the nature of the decision, for example if it relates to the commercial or business affairs of the council. Other documents may be submitted in advance of the decision being taken and will also be published on the website unless exempt.

To request a copy of a decision report or related documents please contact [governancesupportteam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:governancesupportteam@herefordshire.gov.uk) or telephone 01432 261699.

FORWARD PLAN FOR 1 June 2025 ONWARDS



The following information is provided for each entry in the Forward Plan:

Heading	Contains
<b>Report title and purpose</b>	A summary of the proposal
<b>Decision Maker and Due date</b>	Who will take the decision and the date the decision is expected to be made
<b>Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)</b>	The cabinet member with responsibility for this decision and the officers producing the decision report.
<b>Directorate</b>	The directorate of the council responsible for the decision.
<b>Date uploaded onto plan</b>	The date the decision was first uploaded and the notice period started for key decisions.
<b>Decision type, exemptions and urgency</b>	Whether the decision is a Key or Non-Key decision, if the report is expected to be fully open, partly exempt or fully exempt and if urgency procedures are being followed.

Decisions to be taken by Cabinet at a formal meeting are listed first, ordered by date, and include both Key and Non-Key decisions. Decisions to be taken by individual Cabinet Members are then listed, grouped by portfolio area and sorted by date. These include Key decisions only.

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
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### Cabinet decisions by date (Key and Non-key listed)

<b>Q4 2024/25 Budget Report</b> To report the provisional financial outturn position for 2024/25 for revenue and capital budgets, subject to external audit.	Cabinet 5 June 2025	Cabinet member finance and corporate services  Rachael Sanders, Director of Finance <small>Rachael.sanders@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383775</small>	Corporate Support Centre	16 May 2025	<b>Non Key</b> Open
<b>Q4 Performance Report</b> Review performance for Q4 2024/25; and agree any outstanding key milestones in Appendix A to be carried forward to the Delivery Plan 2025/26.	Cabinet 5 June 2025	Cabinet member finance and corporate services  Jessica Karia, Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence <small>jessica.karia@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260976</small>	Corporate Support Centre	16 May 2025	<b>Non Key</b> Open

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Risk Management Strategy (amended to non key)</b> To approve the Risk Management Strategy.	Cabinet 5 June 2025	Cabinet member finance and corporate services  Rachael Sanders, Director of Finance Rachael.sanders@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383775	Corporate Support Centre	16 May 2025	<b>Non Key</b> Open
<b>Children and Young Persons' Improvement Plan - Phase 3</b> To present cabinet with the Phase 3 Children's Services Improvement Plan for endorsement.	Cabinet 17 July 2025	Cabinet member children and young people  Maxine David, Executive Support Officer, Tina Russell, Corporate Director Childrens and Young People maxine.david@herefordshire.gov.uk, tina.russell@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260044, Tel: 01432 260 267	Children and Young People	NEW ITEM	<b>Non Key</b> Open

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Domestic Abuse Strategy for Herefordshire 2025 to 2028</b> To approve the new strategy for reducing the prevalence of and preventing domestic abuse throughout the county.	Cabinet 17 July 2025	Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing  Kayte Thompson-Dixon, Contracts officer Kayte.Thompson-Dixon@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260727	Community Wellbeing	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>New care facility</b> To consider and agree the business case to invest in and develop the council's own care facility in Herefordshire to meet future demand	Cabinet 25 September 2025	Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing  Hilary Hall, Corporate Director Community Wellbeing, Hayley Doyle, Service Director - All Age Commissioning Hilary.Hall@herefordshire.gov.uk, Hayley.Doyle@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260832	Community Wellbeing	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions (Key decisions only)</b>					
<b>Portfolio: adults, health and wellbeing</b>					

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Portfolio: children and young people</b>					
<b>Housing related support for children in care and care leavers aged 16-25</b> To seek approval to commission, by means of a competitive tender process in line with the council's contract procedure rules, a housing related support service for 16–25-year-old children in care and care leavers	Cabinet member children and young people 4 July 2025	Cabinet member children and young people  Wendy Dyer, Commissioning Officer Communities <small>Wendy.Dyer@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 261673</small>	Community Wellbeing	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>Portfolio: community services and assets</b>					
<b>Property Services Estate Capital Building Improvement Programme 2025/28</b> To agree the proposed programme of works as set out in appendices incorporating a series of planned project works to enable Council to deliver on its obligations to maintain buildings fit for purpose.	Cabinet member community services and assets 30 May 2025	Cabinet member community services and assets  Michael Griffin, Head of Major Projects, Anthony Oliver, Interim Director of Commercial Services <small>Michael.Griffin2@herefordshire.gov.uk, anthony.oliver@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383519</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Bromyard Employment Land and Leominster Business Hub Development</b> To seek approval to allocate and spend the Employment Land capital budget to bring forward detailed designs and accompanying business case for the development of business space on the former Bromyard Depot site, and to establish a business hub facility on the ground floor of the Buttercross Building in Leominster.	Cabinet member community services and assets 6 June 2025	Cabinet member economy and growth  David Wright, Head of Economy and Regeneration <small>David.Wright3@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383039</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>Retaining of the swimming pool at Peterchurch Primary School</b> To approve the retention of and structural improvements to the swimming pool at Peterchurch Primary School	Cabinet member community services and assets 20 June 2025	Cabinet member community services and assets  Quentin Mee, Head of Educational Development <small>Quentin.Mee@herefordshire.gov.uk</small>	Children and Young People	16 May 2025	<b>Non Key</b> Open

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Play Area Investment</b> The purpose of this report is to set out how the £1 million for Play Area Investment is proposed to be spent and to seek the necessary approvals to do so.	Cabinet member community services and assets 31 July 2025	Cabinet member community services and assets  Leigh Whitehouse, Group Manager-Streetscene, Public Rights of Way and Traffic Management leigh.whitehouse@herefordshire.gov.uk	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>Portfolio: economy and growth</b>					
<b>Hereford Enterprise Zone Retained Business Rates – Herefordshire Growth Programme</b> To approve the expenditure of the retained business rates from the Hereford Enterprise Zone, to deliver a county wide business growth, skills and inward investment programme	Cabinet member economy and growth 6 June 2025	Cabinet member economy and growth  Roger Allonby, Service Director Economy and Growth Roger.Allonby@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260330	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Merton Meadows Flood Alleviation - delivery of construction works</b> To seek approval to spend the remaining £1.2 million of the £2 million Brownfield Land Release Fund grant awarded by the government for a flood alleviation scheme on the Merton Meadow sites in Hereford to enable them to be released for development. The grant funding will be utilised to deliver the physical flood alleviation works.	Cabinet member economy and growth 27 June 2025	Cabinet member economy and growth  Stephen Holland, Interim Head of Housing Development <small>stephen.holland@herefordshire.gov.uk</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>Portfolio: environment</b>					
<b>Malvern Hills National Landscape Management Plan</b> To adopt the Malvern Hills National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Management Plan 2025-2030	Cabinet member environment 27 May 2025	Cabinet member environment  James Bisset, Principal Countryside Officer, Ben Boswell, Head of Environment, Climate Emergency and Waste Services <small>bboswell@herefordshire.gov.uk</small> <small>Tel: 01432 261930</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open



Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Wye Valley National Landscapes - acceptance of grant funding</b></p> <p>This report seeks approval to accept a number of confirmed and indicative funding awards, allocations and bids from National Grid, DEFRA, Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales for the future management and duties of the Wye Valley National Landscape, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This report also seeks approval to delegate the review of the AONB Management Plan and the renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding between the 4 constituent local authorities, on account of the complex nature of the cross-border designation.</p>	<p>Cabinet member environment</p> <p>6 June 2025</p>	<p>Cabinet member environment</p> <p>Ben Boswell, Head of Environment, Climate Emergency and Waste Services</p> <p>bboswell@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 261930</p>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <p>Open</p>
<p><b>Solar Car Ports at Plough Lane</b></p> <p>To approve the scoping and construction of solar car ports at Plough Lane</p>	<p>Cabinet member environment</p> <p>19 June 2025</p>	<p>Cabinet member environment</p> <p>Katie Ainsworth, Senior Project Manager, Richard Vaughan, Sustainability &amp; Climate Change Manager, Rosanna Willmott, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer</p> <p>katie.ainsworth2@herefordshire.gov.uk, Richard.Vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk, rosanna.willmott@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260192, Tel: 01432 261749</p>	Economy and Environment	NEW ITEM	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <p>Open</p>

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<b>Portfolio: finance and corporate services</b>					
<b>Debt Enforcement Contract Award (amended to non key due to monetary amount)</b> To award the debt enforcement contract	Cabinet member finance and corporate services 6 June 2025	Cabinet member finance and corporate services  Rachael Sanders, Director of Finance <small>Rachael.sanders@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383775</small>	Corporate Support Centre	16 May 2025	<b>Non Key</b> Open
<b>Portfolio: roads and regulatory services</b>					
<b>Portfolio: transport and infrastructure</b>					

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Capability and Ambition Fund 2025/26 allocation</b> The purpose of the report is to confirm what Herefordshire Council will deliver with the Capability and Ambition Fund grant	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure 6 June 2025	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure  Ffion Horton, Transport Planning Services Manager, Scott Tompkins, Delivery Director - Infrastructure, Richard Vaughan, Sustainability & Climate Change Manager  <small>ffion.horton@herefordshire.gov.uk,            scott.tompkins@herefordshire.gov.uk,            Richard.Vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk            Tel: 01432 260192</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>Non Key</b> Open
<b>Road Safety Schemes</b> The purpose of this report is to set out how the £3.0 million for Road Safety Schemes is proposed to be spent and to seek the necessary approvals to do so.	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure 6 June 2025	Cabinet member roads and regulatory services  Ed Bradford, Head of Highways and Traffic  <small>Edward.Bradford@herefordshire.gov.uk            Tel: 01432 260786</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<b>Bus Service Improvement Plan capital funding</b> The purpose of this report is to set out how the £1.1 million of Bus Service Improvement Plan capital spend is proposed to be spent and to seek the necessary approvals to do so.	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure 6 June 2025	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure  David Land, Head of Transport and Access Services <small>david.land@herefordshire.gov.uk</small> <small>Tel: 01432 383484</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>Herefordshire Flood Risk Mitigation</b> The purpose of this report is to set out how the £2.055 million for Herefordshire Flood Risk Mitigation is proposed to be spent and to seek the necessary approvals to do so.	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure 6 June 2025	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure  Steve Hodges, Directorate services team leader <small>sthodges@herefordshire.gov.uk</small> <small>Tel: 01432 261923</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open
<b>Local Transport Grant allocation</b> To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Economy and Environment to spend the Local Transport Grant, Local Transport Resource Fund and Integrated Transport Block funding from the Department for Transport	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure 6 June 2025	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure  Scott Tompkins, Delivery Director - Infrastructure <small>scott.tompkins@herefordshire.gov.uk</small>	Economy and Environment	16 May 2025	<b>KEY</b> Open Urgent

