



From mountain to sea

Cultural Strategy

2018 - 2028



'WORKING TOGETHER FOR FAIRER BETTER LIVES'



FOREWORD



from Councillor Anne Stirling,
Chair of the Communities Committee

This is an exciting time for Cultural development in Aberdeenshire, as we recognise and celebrate the immense diversity across our communities and the many opportunities that brings. This strategy for real change will be made possible through the strong partnerships between Aberdeenshire Council, our key partners, third sector organisations and the dedicated and passionate people in our communities.

INTRODUCTION

The word 'culture' means many things to many people, but it touches us all; whether reading a book, watching a movie, visiting the theatre or a museum, setting up your own Youtube channel or joining a local knitting group. Each one of these activities, and countless more, have one thing in common - they allow us all to engage in something we enjoy, something to inspire or educate us, to allow us to forget the sometimes stressful parts of our day to day living.

Crucially, cultural activities can also provide a lifeline to the most vulnerable in our communities; people who are lonely, bereaved, sick, or new to our communities and those looking to gain knowledge and experience to get on in life.

While this strategy recognises the very real importance of our libraries, theatre spaces, town halls, museums and visitor attractions and the need to continue to improve and develop these, it also ensures we connect with others to look at creative, meaningful and effective ways of improving the health & wellbeing of everyone, through an innovative approach to Culture in Aberdeenshire.

In delivering this strategy and its outcomes we are driven by Aberdeenshire Council priorities. The key priorities, identified as being most relevant to Cultural services, through the engagement process, are:

- Provide the best life chances for all our children and young people by raising levels of attainment and achievement
- Encourage active lifestyles and promote well-being with a focus on obesity and mental health
- Support the delivery of the Health & Social Care Strategic Plan

WHAT IS CULTURE?

For the purposes of this strategy we include all cultural activities and services taking place in Aberdeenshire. For Aberdeenshire Council this includes; Libraries and Information Services, Arts Development and Media Unit, Museums, Macduff Marine Aquarium and our Built Heritage.

We also include groups and cultural activities provided by the voluntary and private sectors, acknowledging the incredible diversity of provision and activities that exists across the whole of Aberdeenshire.

Equally important is the wealth of key partners, stakeholders, artists and performers who produce and provide cultural programmes, as we strive to develop connected and cohesive communities through culture. This strategy also recognises the huge and valued contribution that Aberdeenshire's schools make to our cultural life.

WHAT ARE THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

For the purposes of this strategy the 'Creative Industries' refer to 13 distinct industries, which are; advertising, architecture, art and antiques, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, and TV and radio.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population



Aberdeenshire's population

In 2016
262,190

Aberdeenshire's Child Population

a predicted rise of

13.8% of
0-15 year olds
between
2012 and 2037

Education

In Aberdeenshire, percentage of school leavers moving in to further education, training or employment is

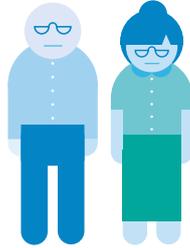
95.5%
1.8% above
national average.

AGE

by **2035**
the number of
residents aged

65+

will have increased by
65% to 75,000



Households in
Aberdeenshire
likely to increase from

108,000 in 2014
to **135,000** in 2039



13%
of children
live in
poverty

Aberdeenshire is committed to giving our children the best start in life, with creative activities being a vital part of this.

Data from Visit Aberdeenshire shows

1,332,000

people visited
Aberdeenshire &
Aberdeen
in 2016,
generating a
visitor spend of

£337m

22% of visitors were from overseas and **36% stated** History and Culture as their reason for visiting. These statistics show a real opportunity for cultural activities to contribute to Cultural Tourism in the North East.

This strategy recognises that cultural participation is a uniquely effective tool for bringing people together and building stronger communities.

Through the delivery of the strategy we will embrace the population changes and take into account the challenges of the geographical and economic differences to ensure a fair and equitable provision across Aberdeenshire.

Cultural Strategy 2018 - 2028

WHAT WE WILL DO

Strategic Outcome 1 – The Wider World

A Place known for our distinctive culture

- Our unique **Doric culture** will be **promoted and celebrated**
- We will celebrate our places and people; from **Lewis Grassic Gibbon** to **Thomas Blake Glover**, **Joan Eardley** and **Emeli Sandé**
- We will work to support a **national and international cultural profile** for Aberdeenshire, including our **built heritage**
- We will **develop our collections** and **local history** and provide **digital access** around the world



Strategic Outcome 2 – Our Sense of Place

A Place where communities will be stronger and more connected

- We will use **culture** to **tackle inequalities** and **promote diversity** in our communities
- We will **develop opportunities** for people to come together to **share, learn and create**
- We will help “**close the gap**” in attainment through **targeted interventions using culture**
- We will **support the promotion and protection of the natural and historic features** that **give our communities a sense of place and contribute to their identity**





Strategic Outcome 3 – Our Local Economies

A Place where our towns and villages are vibrant and thriving

- We will work with the economic development service and regional economic bodies to support a **strong and diverse creative industry** in the region, working with others to **attract inward investment**
- We will support a thriving programme of **performances, exhibitions, classes and events** and adopt a fair but **entrepreneurial approach to maximising income**
- We will **use culture** to help make Aberdeenshire a “**must visit**” tourist destination
- We will **support volunteering, modern apprenticeships, accredited learning** and other initiatives to **support people in to work**



Strategic Outcome 4 – Health and Wellbeing

A Place where lives are enriched and where people are happier and healthier

- We will encourage and promote **learning and literacy**
- We will work with healthcare providers to **support programmes** which promote **good mental health** and **improve life chances**
- We will use **cultural activity** to help older people live **rich and independent lives** for longer

GETTING INVOLVED

If you would like to know more, become involved in delivering on Aberdeenshire's Cultural Strategy; or if you or your organisation can contribute to the success of the strategy, please get in touch by emailing us at cultureandsport@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

HOW WILL WE DELIVER THE STRATEGY?

- Through strong and meaningful cultural partnerships to maximise opportunity
- Through focusing our resources to deliver the services our communities will need in the future; rationalising our estate and investing and developing venues and facilities
- Through support to a strong and dynamic third and voluntary sector
- Through ongoing engagement, across our communities, in the planning and delivery of services.

During 2017 / 2018

1.9 m
Library visits

36,373
Museum visits

1,673
YMI
participants

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'VE SUCCEEDED?

- There will be an increase in people participating in, and benefiting from, cultural activity
- The Council and its partners will develop detailed action plans with measurable outcomes, which will be reviewed annually

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