



**Warwickshire's**

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# **HERITAGE & CULTURE STRATEGY**

## 2020—2025



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# Introduction

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**W**arwickshire has a rich heritage and culture, stretching back over centuries. The county is rightly proud of its history, and the collective endeavours and accomplishments of previous generations of Warwickshire citizens. Now we have developed a strategic plan for the future, which both builds on past achievements and delivers on present-day priorities.

We are a well-connected county, with a wealth of historic and natural assets that inspire and support the growing diversification of our economy and communities. Our county is already a great place to live, work and do business. The challenge is to make it even better. The County Council's overriding ambition is to make Warwickshire 'the best it can be'. The Heritage and Culture Strategy is shaped around three main themes which reflect



current priorities - health and well-being, sense of place, and economic vibrancy.

I must thank the many heritage and culture organisations and practitioners who contributed their ideas and expertise to this Strategy. Together we have drawn up an ambitious blueprint for the heritage and culture sector in Warwickshire, based on new levels of co-operation and joint-working towards shared goals.

***Councillor Izzi Seccombe, OBE  
Leader of Warwickshire County Council***







Hat Making,  
Atherstone

# Warwickshire

## Today



**W**arwickshire covers an area of roughly 760 square miles. It has no cities but several large towns and many smaller villages. It is a relatively green county - 64% of the land area is classed as rural - with a strong agricultural heritage and a network of green spaces, country parks and accessible waterways. Broadly-speaking, there is a north-south divide, with post-industrial communities in the north and more affluent areas further south.

The population of around 571,000 is approximately 69% urban and 31% rural. Forecasts suggest significant population growth over the next 20 years, driven primarily by migration and an ageing population. The number of people aged over 85 is expected to double between 2011 and 2021. At the last census (2011) non 'White British' groups made up approximately 12% of the population. This figure is also forecast to grow.

### Economy

The county has one of the fastest growing economies in the country and the past two decades have seen a shift in economic profile. Whilst some traditional industries have disappeared - the last Warwickshire colliery, for example, closed in 2013 - the motor industry is still a major employer. Warwickshire today is playing a leading role in the research and development of future road transport - including zero carbon and autonomous vehicles - bringing together the county's strengths in manufacturing and digital technology. New technology companies such as the cluster of computer gaming companies based in Leamington Spa (10% of the UK total) are driving forward digital innovation and next generation creative content. Warwickshire's growing Higher and Further Education sectors are key drivers in this area, supporting sector skills development and providing an environment for creativity and innovation to flourish.



### Heritage and Culture

The Heritage and Culture sector in Warwickshire has an international profile, predominantly driven by the 'brand' of Shakespeare. Tourism is worth just over £1.1 billion to the Warwickshire economy every year and supports some 20,300 jobs. Across the county there are clusters of small to medium-sized arts and heritage creative producers, artists, venues and heritage attractions providing access to a broad range of work and engagement opportunities. Warwickshire also has a successful and growing festival scene encompassing music, performing and visual art, literature and food. A strong heritage and culture helps attract inward investment. New and relocating businesses see Warwickshire as a dynamic, innovative and well-connected county where good staff will be happy to live and work.







### **Challenges**

The challenges facing Warwickshire mirror those of the nation as a whole - to address the north-south divide and rural isolation, and to 'level the playing field' for all citizens, regardless of where they live. There is a need to address issues arising from an ageing population. The changing face of the workforce means a greater need to nurture and invest in creative talent, supporting a culture of innovation. Good health and well-being are vital factors in ensuring our communities play an active part in shaping Warwickshire's future. Access to heritage and culture widens horizons, enriches lives, and engenders a sense of belonging. The Heritage and Culture Strategy aims to contribute on all fronts.



### County Council Context

The Heritage and Culture Strategy 2020 - 2025 has clear synergies with Warwickshire County Council's council plan which aims to:

- capitalise on the strengths of individuals, communities and our collective assets to make Warwickshire the best it can be, now and for future generations
- build on the strengths of the county as a whole, its communities, individual people and the Council as an organisation - focusing on our two priority outcomes for the county:
- Warwickshire's Communities and Individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent
- Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training and skills and infrastructure

In addition, heritage and culture will play a key role in the Place Strategy that is currently being developed.



A man and child  
look over an exhibit  
in Warwick Market  
Hall Museum.



# Heritage and Culture Defined

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**W**e have taken a broad definition encompassing not only history and the arts but also the natural environment, architecture, industry, innovation and sport. By 'heritage and culture' we mean:

- our collective experience, endeavour and achievement over centuries
- our history and our place in the world
- who we are, what we stand for and where we belong
- the context of our lives and the backdrop to our future hopes and aspirations
- what makes us proud to be from Warwickshire



A statue of William Webb Ellis in Rugby.

## *In the context of this strategy, heritage and culture:*

- describes our past, explains our present and informs our future
- celebrates our diversity but gives us a cohesive identity
- contributes to our well-being and economic growth

# Why We Need A Heritage & Culture Strategy

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- 1.** There is a strong evidence base for the wider benefits of heritage and culture to society
- 2.** The heritage and culture sector makes a significant contribution to the growing economy in Warwickshire
- 3.** Warwickshire is well-placed to take advantage of major forthcoming cultural events in our two nearest cities - Coventry City of Culture 2021 and Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022
- 4.** Warwickshire is rich in heritage and natural assets, which require safeguarding for future generations to enjoy
- 5.** We are stronger and can achieve more together. By pooling our efforts and resources on clearly-defined, well-coordinated campaigns we can be more effective and reach more people
- 6.** We need to put our creativity and expertise to work on tackling wider issues for Warwickshire, and inspire and help local people to live healthier and more fulfilling lives





Automotive  
production line in  
Leamington Spa.



# Vision and Objectives

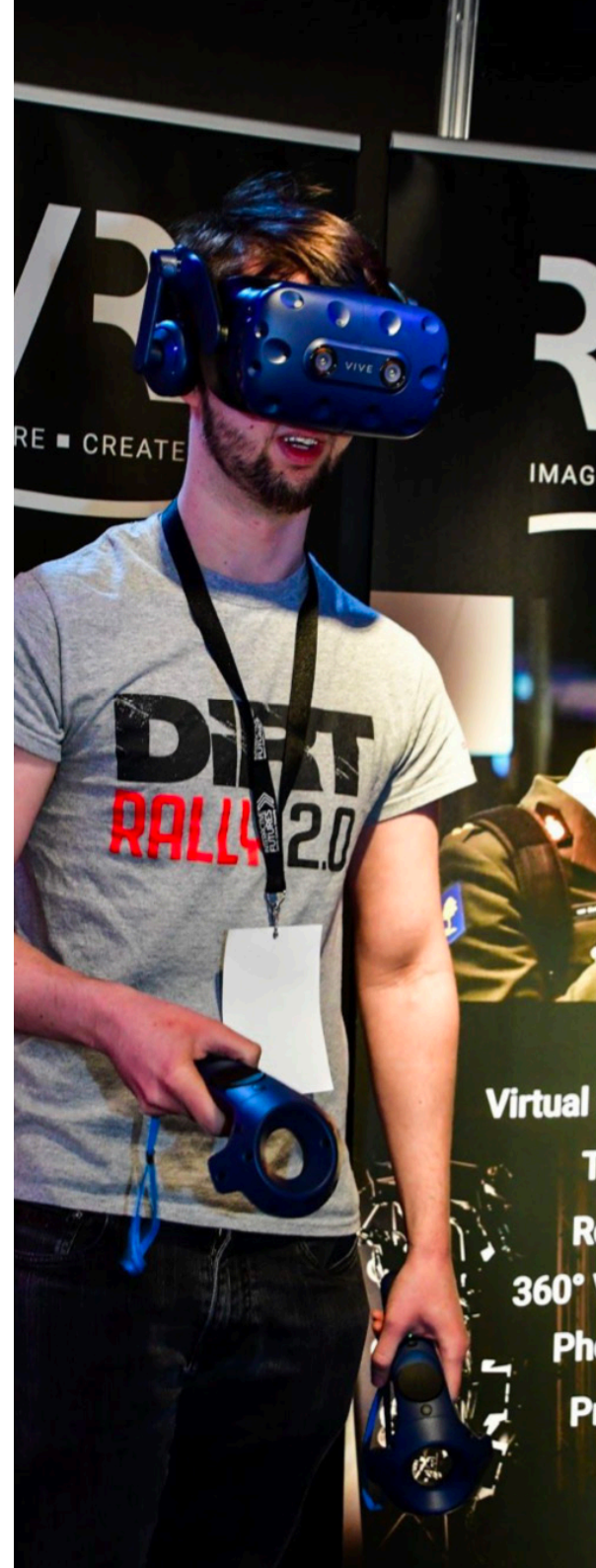
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## Our vision is:

*By 2025 Warwickshire will have a thriving, innovative and creative heritage and culture sector working collaboratively to develop and deliver a rich, high quality, accessible heritage and cultural offer for all who live, work and visit Warwickshire*

## Our vision is underpinned by the following objectives:

- To create the conditions to enable a thriving, innovative and creative heritage and culture sector
- To empower the heritage and culture sector to support the county council in transforming the way services are designed and delivered for the benefit of all who live, work and visit Warwickshire



# Recent Research:

## Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

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**I**n May 2019 the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport published a report on Changing Lives: the social impact of participation in culture and sport. The report suggested that 'arguably the most important finding from this inquiry is that there is no dispute about the positive social impact of participation in culture and sport'.

There was plentiful evidence of the benefits to both physical and mental health, and a focus on 'social prescribing' - GPs and other health professionals referring people to activities in their community instead of only offering medication. The report stressed the importance of health and well-being economically, as well as for individuals, by reducing demand for health and social care services, and the costs of providing them.



[publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/734/73402.htm](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/734/73402.htm)

Warwick Museum.

# Recent Research:

## Arts Council England

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**T**hree key facts underpin Arts Council England's starting point to explaining *why art and culture matters*:

- Art and culture contribute £10.6 billion to the UK economy - the UK has a creative economy worth £27 billion and culture brings £850 million to UK, through tourism, each year.
- Arts and culture help tackle social injustice - theatres, museums, galleries and libraries are the beating heart of our towns and cities. Not only do they bring prosperity, they bring communities together and make life worth living

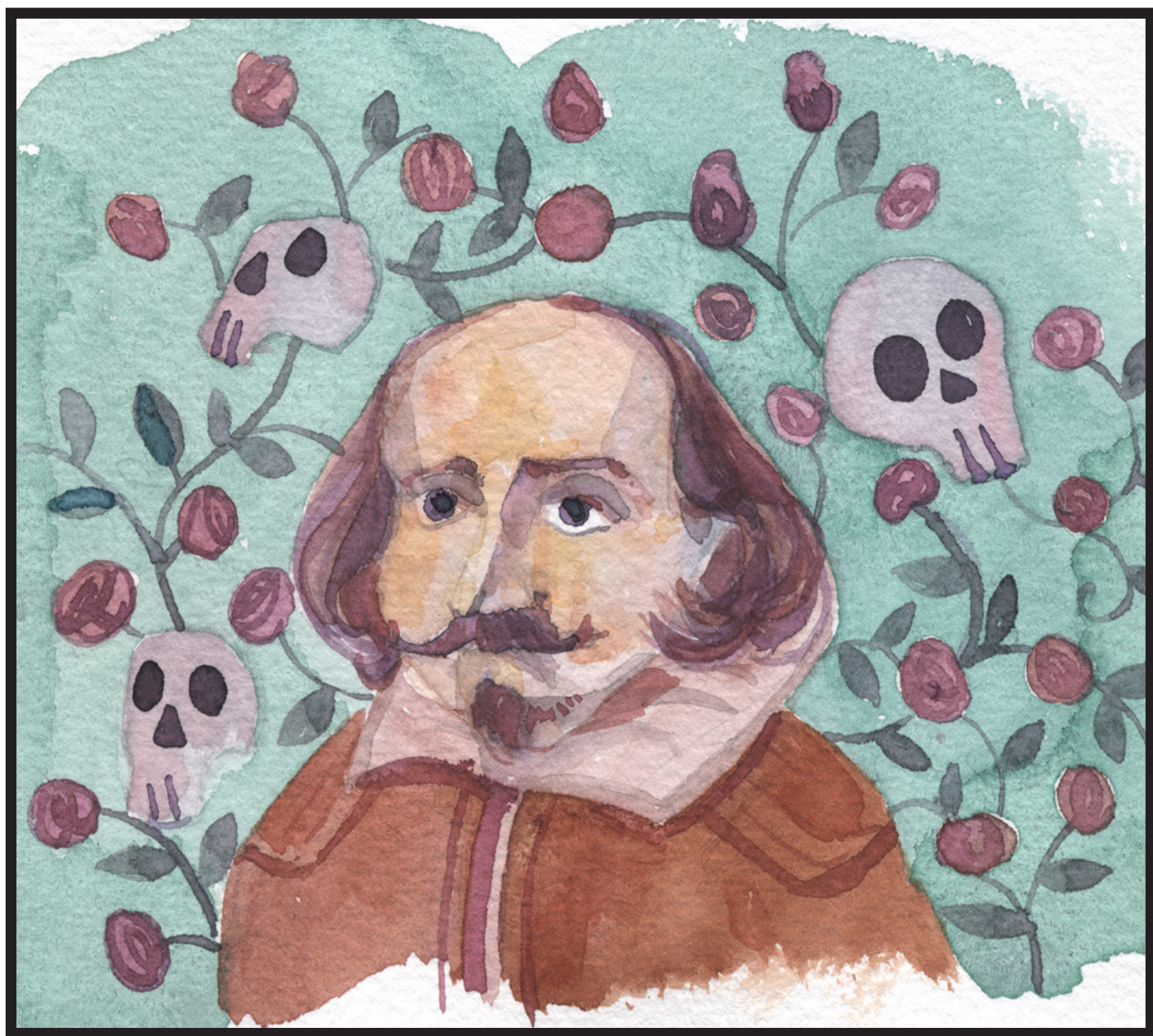


- Our creative industries are successful throughout the world - our leading cultural institutions are a calling card worldwide and have important trading links from the US or Germany to China and South Korea. Last year our National Portfolio Organisations earned £57 million abroad.



[arts council.org.uk/make-case-art-and-culture/why-art-and-culture-matters](https://arts council.org.uk/make-case-art-and-culture/why-art-and-culture-matters)









# Recent Research: Culture is Digital

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**G**overnment figures suggest a total online audience of 50.4 million people in the UK, with the average Briton spending 24 hours a week online.

The Culture is Digital project stresses that today's audiences - particularly younger people - are no longer passive receivers of culture and expect instant access to all forms of digital content. This has implications for digital skill-levels and resources within the sector and its capability to exploit opportunities to widen public access, increase audience engagement and enhance customer experiences through technology.

The campaign describes the culture and technology sectors as "the ultimate power couple" and calls for more partnership working between the two to drive innovation.



[gov.uk/government/publications/  
culture-is-digital](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/culture-is-digital)



# Big City Events

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## **Coventry City Of Culture 2021**

Coventry will become the UK City of Culture in 2021 - launching a huge campaign to celebrate and showcase the city and what it has to offer. Based on the experiences of previous winners of the title, City of Culture status will boost the local economy, tourism, arts and culture, and civic pride.

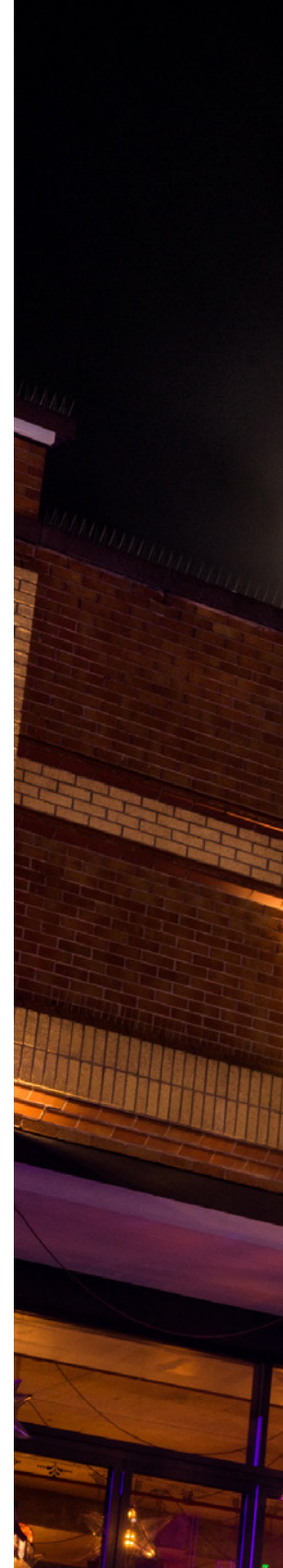
Warwickshire County Council is gearing up to take advantage of the opportunities. It has invested £1 million into the project and has a place on the board of the Coventry City of Culture Trust, an independent charity set up to manage the process.

[coventry2021.co.uk/](http://coventry2021.co.uk/)

## **Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022**

England's second city will host the Commonwealth Games in 2022, with the stated aim of 'showcasing the region's strengths'. Sporting venues across the West Midlands include Leamington Spa, which will host Lawn Bowls competitions. Plans are already underway to deliver a wider cultural programme linked to the games, with opportunities for Warwickshire organisations, businesses and local communities to get involved.

[birmingham.gov.uk/Birmingham2022](http://birmingham.gov.uk/Birmingham2022)







SELF-SACRIFICE

# What Will The Strategy Do?

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**T**he strategy has been shaped around three main themes or building blocks and is underpinned by a commitment to ensuring equality of access:



## Health and Well-being

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Taking part in heritage and cultural activity can promote good physical and mental health and provide a focus for promoting independence, happiness and engagement for everyone.

## Objectives

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- Support mental health and well-being
- Combat loneliness and isolation
- Promote physical activity and fitness
- Provide further evidence of the benefits of heritage and culture to health and well-being

## We will:

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- Work with partners to promote spaces and places where cultural product can actively support physical and mental well-being
- Explore areas of work which provide evidence that heritage and culture can help the prevention and escalation of health issues
- Work with partners to develop projects which combat loneliness and isolation
- Work with Warwickshire's district and borough councils to maximise opportunities for sports and physical activities
- Work collaboratively with the Creative Health Alliance to initiate and support projects which use heritage and culture to promote good physical and mental health





## Sense of Place

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Heritage and culture promote a sense of identity, providing a focus for growing strong communities and individuals who feel empowered to make choices that affect their lives and giving people a feeling of belonging to a place.



## Objectives

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- Respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse population
- Promote pride in, and a sense of belonging to, local communities and the county as a whole
- Protect Warwickshire's heritage and cultural assets, historic and natural environment for the future
- Attract investment in new projects to maximise the benefits of the county's heritage and cultural assets

## We will:

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- Work as a sector to ensure our heritage and cultural offer reflects the increasingly diverse population in Warwickshire
- Provide greater opportunities for residents to have access to, celebrate and have a voice for their own heritage and culture, to make them feel part of a Warwickshire community
- Build on Warwickshire's heritage and cultural assets, protecting our valued historic and natural environment - developing and investing in new assets for future generations to enjoy
- Work with partners to identify, and maximise the benefits of, Warwickshire's unique heritage and cultural assets to both residents and visitors

## **Economic Vibrancy**

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Heritage and culture are an important and growing part of the creative and cultural economy in Warwickshire.

## **Objectives**

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- Exploit opportunities to capitalise on Coventry City of Culture and Birmingham Commonwealth Games
- Support and promote growth in the heritage and culture sector
- Maximise the potential benefits of new technology
- Promote investment to support, grow and retain creative talent
- Contribute to the growth of the visitor economy

**We will:**

- Capitalise on the investment in Coventry City of Culture to create a lasting legacy of cultural growth in Warwickshire
- Work collaboratively to support the growth of emerging and small scale creative and cultural businesses, organisations and practitioners in Warwickshire and maximise the potential benefits of new technology in supporting this growth
- Work in partnership to support investment, growth and retention of creative talent in Warwickshire
- Maximise the contribution of heritage and culture in driving growth in the visitor economy
- Promote heritage and culture nationally and internationally to drive more inward investment



# Sector Engagement



**W**arwickshire County Council is spearheading the Strategy in collaboration with the local heritage and culture

sector. Initial engagement was via an online survey and an all-day conference in Warwick at which representatives of partner authorities and heritage/arts organisations large and small were able to contribute their ideas, priorities and expertise via a series of workshops.

The July 2019 survey attracted responses from a wide range of heritage and culture organisations across Warwickshire. The results revealed (average percentages):

- confirmation of why we need a Warwickshire Heritage and Culture Strategy (91%)
- majority approval of the contextual definition (83%)

- strong support for health and well-being (91%), sense of place (91%) and economic (86%) priorities

Discussions at the conference were wide-ranging. Some recurring themes emerged: Delegates felt the Heritage and Culture Strategy should be based on a shared identity and infrastructure and that it should be for everyone.

The Strategy should be countywide, cross-departmental, cross-sector and responsive to the needs of local communities. Advocacy, promotion and sustainability were key issues and there were calls for ‘grass roots’ activity and engagement. The audience was strongly in favour of developing a shared action plan for the county.





The Old Shire Hall.





# Governance

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**T**he Strategy will be managed by Warwickshire County Council with continuing input from partners and stakeholders.

A Steering Group has been set up to oversee and monitor progress with representatives from across the County Council. This Group will report on a bi-annual basis to the broader Stakeholders Group, which includes representatives from Warwickshire's district and borough councils with backgrounds in heritage and culture, tourism and economic development, health and well-being, and the third sector.



Needle making  
benches in Nuneaton.

# Working Together To Achieve Our Priorities

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**The success of the Warwickshire Heritage and Culture Strategy will depend on sector partners and stakeholders working together to achieve shared goals.** We will use our collective voice to influence funders and decision-makers, using evidence-based research and evaluation to persuade them of the value and further potential of heritage and culture to benefit Warwickshire people and the local economy. We will engage with other sectors - business, tourism, health and education - to press the case for heritage and culture as a force for the greater good. Communication will be key to ensuring our impact on health and well-being, sense of place and economic vibrancy is clear to all.

## Year 1 Action Plan

The clear message from the sector, which emerged from initial engagement, was that the Warwickshire Heritage and Culture

Strategy should be developed and delivered in partnership. We will therefore work with partners and stakeholders to co-produce an action plan ensuring we listen to sector specialists and provide a firm footing to move forward.

Over the next six months we will:

- Identify a model of partnership working to inform the governance of the Strategy
- Set up a series of workshops, across the county, at which partners and stakeholders will help to develop a workable and achievable action plan
- Develop an agile action plan in a digital format to deliver the Strategy's priorities
- Be ambitious and take risks and begin developing new partnerships to achieve our priorities





- Explore potential for investment in heritage and culture from external sources, for example, Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England
- Pursue opportunities for heritage and culture in Warwickshire to benefit from Coventry City of Culture and the Birmingham Commonwealth Games
- Consider how we can work collectively to raise Warwickshire's profile as a destination and cultural brand at national and international level
- Work in partnership with the third sector and volunteers on co-production, ensuring communities have a voice in shaping and delivering local, relevant cultural product
- Begin the process of identifying potential flagship heritage and culture projects for the county

- Work in partnership with the Creative Health Alliance to move forward collaborative working in relation to physical and mental health
- Work with partners and stakeholders to identifying ways to increase opportunities for public participation in sports and other physical activities
- Collectively consider and agree how we will measure success
- Schedule annual or bi-annual conferences to review and update the action plan and to hear from leading national figures on heritage and culture

We will monitor our progress with partners on a regular basis and share our results and review the Strategy in three years' time.





# Next Steps:

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**We will work with our colleagues, partners and stakeholders to identify a governance structure to support the creation, development and delivery of an action plan and set out how we will make progress against the identified priorities.**

**This process will start immediately, with a series of meetings with stakeholders, across the county, to help shape the process.**

**We aim to finalise the outline plan by February 2020, for launch in March 2020.**

# What Will Success Look Like?

Our ambition is for Warwickshire to be known as a creative county where:

- people choose to live, work and invest
- diversity thrives and is celebrated
- all citizens have access to high-quality heritage and culture from an early age

We aim to enhance Warwickshire's reputation as a creative county locally, nationally and internationally and to find new ways to showcase and market our heritage and culture assets. We want to expand Warwickshire's heritage and cultural tourism offer and grow the visitor economy through enhanced connectivity and innovation.

We also want Warwickshire to be known as a county with a strong focus on improving the health and well-being of its people and a place they are proud to call home.



## How can you get involved?

If you are interested in helping to shape the action plan or want to find out more please email:

**[heritageandculture@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:heritageandculture@warwickshire.gov.uk)**



# How Will We Measure Success?



Partners and stakeholders will need to collectively consider the best ways to capture data both quantitative and qualitative as they work together to develop the Strategy's action plan. Measures might include:

- Increased public participation in heritage and culture, sports and other physical activities
- Wider access to heritage and culture activities and extended reach
- Increased investment in Warwickshire's creative talent, product and profile
- Successful internal and external funding bids
- Number and scope of new or expanded collaborative projects
- Benefits derived from opportunities presented by Coventry City of Culture and Birmingham Commonwealth Games
- Media coverage, marketing, promotion and publicity
- Increased visitor numbers





LIBRARY AND REGISTRATION SERVICE

Public Library

# Thank You!

Warwickshire County Council would like to thank everyone who helped to develop this Strategy. Many different organisations, from across the local heritage and culture sector, contributed their ideas, expertise, and enthusiasm. We hope these organisations will continue work in partnership - along with others - to draw up an ambitious and achievable action plan to take the Warwickshire Heritage and Culture Strategy forward over the next five years.

# Photo Sources:

With thanks to 'Our Warwickshire' ([ourwarwickshire.org.uk](http://ourwarwickshire.org.uk)) for photographs featured on pages 1, 4, 5, 7, 12, 13, 27, 31 and 35 - and to Wikipedia (Creative Commons) for images used on pages 1, 8 and 22.

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