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11 September, 2007

**Report to**  
Cabinet

**Report of**  
Director of Community Services

**Title**  
Cultural and Events Strategies

**Ward**  
City-wide

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### **1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report seeks to outline the development process and set out the priorities and delivery plan for the Cultural Strategy for the city.

### **2 Recommendations**

Cabinet are requested to:

- 2.1 approve for the Cultural Strategy for the city.

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has published two sets of guidance for the development of cultural strategies: Creating Opportunities (2000), and DCMS subsequent guidance – Leading the Good Life (2004).
- 3.2 The Cultural Strategy for the city has been developed using the DCMS definition of culture, outlined below as an illustrative rather than exhaustive list:
- the performing and visual arts, craft and fashion
  - media, film, television, video and language
  - museums, artefacts, archives and design
  - libraries, literature, writing and publishing
  - the built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
  - sports events, facilities and activities
  - parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
  - children's play, playgrounds and play activities
  - tourism, festival and attractions
  - informal leisure pursuits

3.3 DCMS guidance recognises that culture is also about:

- relationships - between individuals and groups
- shared memories, experience and identity
- diverse cultural, faith and historic backgrounds
- social standards, values and norms
- what we consider valuable to pass on to future generations.

3.4 This is a key strategy for the city. It is known that cities that place culture (including sport) at the heart of development tend to attract improved business and residential interest. It is also known that many aspects of cultural provision contribute across the range of local government priorities, such as: improving social cohesion, economic vitality, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, reducing health inequalities and supporting educational achievement.

3.5 A previous cultural strategy for Coventry had not been developed within the guidelines of the DCMS and was not developed with the full support of the Cultural Partnership for the city. This strategy addresses these issues and was developed by and is supported by the key cultural agencies in the city. The Coventry Cultural and Events Strategy is attached as Appendix Two.

3.6 A process was agreed with the Cultural Partnership, in line with guidance to develop the strategy, and this has been deployed over the last eight months, including specific events such as Made in Coventry<sup>1</sup> to gain creative input in the process, and improve existing consultation data.

3.7 The strategy was considered by Scrutiny Board 4 on 27 June 2007, and two issues were raised for consideration, in relation to University relationships, and the anticipated achievements. The extract from the minutes are attached as Appendix One.

3.8 Guiding principles for the development of the strategy were agreed and are:

- **focus on the 'big issues'** that affect the cultural sector and which offer the maximum opportunity for strengthening culture across the city, enhancing its impact on local communities as well as the proposed growth and development of Coventry.
- **build on Coventry's strengths, address the existing opportunities** and identify the objectives against which present levels of resourcing need to be measured. It will not rule out initiatives requiring new resources, but will focus on making the best use of what is already in place.
- **be ambitious and aim for distinctiveness**, innovation, high quality and high profile, but none of this needs be in conflict with inclusiveness – indeed, quality and distinctiveness will come from capitalising on widespread community involvement and access, building an active and equitable base for cultural development across the city.
- **seek to increase participation** in all forms of cultural activity particularly by priority groups and priority neighbourhoods.
- **recognise that all stages of cultural 'production and consumption'** need to be addressed if a strong cultural sector is to be developed in the city.

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<sup>1</sup> The community celebration to open the Ricoh Arena

- **initiate a process to strengthen the leadership** for and understanding of culture's contribution to the future development of Coventry. It will aim to identify champions in all fields, across generations, social and ethnic groups.
- **ensure effective mechanisms for communication** and implementation of its objectives across stakeholders and the wider community.

### 3.9 Key priorities for the city have emerged:

#### a. **Develop the new Creative Coventry**

Culture has a vital role to play in Coventry's future as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city. The development of creative and innovative businesses can help secure it as a stronger place within the knowledge-based global economy. The development of a robust and vibrant cultural sector will make it attractive to the new businesses and creative people who will help Coventry thrive.

#### b. **Raise Coventry's profile with the community and visitors**

Culture in Coventry needs to raise its own profile and project an image of quality, distinctiveness, excitement and innovation. It needs to fulfil its potential role in promoting the city as a place to live, work, visit or do business in and in creating a vibrant cultural life for its communities and those attracted to the city. It needs to bring a greater degree of co-ordination to promoting the city and its culture – presenting a coherent vision and driven by renewed confidence in Coventry's future.

#### c. **Connect the city's culture to the local neighbourhood**

The cultural sector and its partners need to address the negative perceptions of culture in Coventry and the gaps in participation in cultural activities or access to cultural opportunities, particularly in the priority neighbourhoods. There needs to be chances for participation, volunteering and employment in and enjoyment of a wide range of cultural activities, celebration and showcasing of local and diverse cultural expression and the development of pride in the city's cultural activities.

#### d. **Make the city centre a vibrant centre of culture**

Cultural activity can help Coventry's city centre become a more attractive place for local people and increase numbers of visitors and address the many negative perceptions currently held about it. In the daytime and especially in the evening culture can enhance the quality and excitement of the built environment, bring animation to its streets and malls, encourage a wider range of users and uses and project a positive image of Coventry's diverse communities and innovative culture.

#### e. **Contribute to social inclusion and community cohesion across the City**

Ensure that activities that contribute to the cultural offer also offer sustained opportunities for those who may be less advantaged through their economic position, their age or through their disability. To ensure that the cultural sector is contributing to lower crime rates, increasing community cohesion and contributing to greater recognition of the different cultural backgrounds that make up the city.

3.10 Twelve initiatives to deliver these priorities are recommended within the strategy. Each initiative has a leader, and identified and agreed partners to deliver the action required.

3.11 Areas for measurement of success are outlined and will input into the Cultural Partnership's key measures, within the framework of the Coventry Partnership.

3.12 The Partnership recognises that this will be a "live" document and are keen to start delivery of the key actions in a timely way, with a review planned annually. It is recognised that the

development of a culturally vibrant and successful city is dependant upon many organisations and sectors working together, and the Cultural Partnership plans to develop the cultural leadership of the city as recommended in the strategy to gain cultural champions across many sectors.

- 3.13 A "popular" printed version of the strategy will be developed following approval, based on the executive summary, using the outlined case studies to bring the power of cultural activities to life through real life experiences and high quality images.
- 3.14 The full version of the strategy will be provided to major organisations and partners and available to all organisations requesting it. It will also be published on the website and provided to appropriate regional agencies.

#### 4 Proposal and Other Options to be Considered

- 4.1 The proposal is that the strategy is adopted for the City.

#### 5 Other specific implications

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value		✓
Children and Young People		
Comparable Benchmark Data		✓
Corporate Parenting		✓
Coventry Community Plan		
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities		✓
Finance		✓
Health and Safety		✓
Human Resources		✓
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations		
Information and Communications Technology		✓
Legal Implications		✓
Neighbourhood Management		✓
Property Implications		✓
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management		✓
Sustainable Development		✓
Trade Union Consultation		✓
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact		

**5.1 Children and Young People**

The strategy supports the delivery of cultural opportunities for children and young people in the City.

**5.2 Coventry Community Plan**

The Strategy development is a key action of the community plan for the Cultural Partnership.

**5.3 Impact on Partner Organisations**

The key partner organisations for culture in the City endorse the strategy through the Cultural Partnership, and are leaders in the delivery of the action plan.

**5.4 Voluntary Sector – the Coventry Compact**

The strategy delivers the Compact through the provision of a clear framework to support delivery of cultural services by the voluntary sector.

**6 Monitoring**

6.1 The strategy action plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

**7 Timescale and expected outcomes**

7.1 It is expected that if the recommended strategy is adopted it will be printed and distributed during October 2007. Outcomes will be monitored within the Coventry Partnership framework.

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Key Decision</b>	√	
<b>Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)</b>	√ <b>26 June 2007</b>	
<b>Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)</b>		√

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

<b>Description of paper</b>	<b>Location</b>
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**EXTRACT FROM SCRUTINY BOARD (4)**  
**(COMMUNITY SERVICES, HEALTH (POLICY AND INEQUALITIES), CULTURE, LEISURE**  
**AND LIBRARIES, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY)**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**4. Cultural Strategy Consultation**

Alice Davey, Head of Culture, Leisure and Libraries, attended the meeting together with Brian Mitchell, of Creative Cultures, to brief the Board on the Cultural Strategy Consultation.

The Board noted that the Cultural Partnership had undertaken the development of a Cultural Strategy for the City, which was currently in the public consultation phase. The public consultation period opened on 19th June 2007, and would run to the end of June 2007. The process had followed the current guidance provided by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The DCMS definition of culture for the development of such strategies covered the following:

- The performing and visual arts, craft and fashion
- Media, film, television, video and language
- Museums, artefacts, archives and design
- Libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- The built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- Sports events, facilities and activities
- Parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- Children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- Tourism, festival and attractions
- Informal leisure pursuits

Alice reported that Scrutiny Board Members were encouraged to respond to the strategy, and in particular consider the priorities and initiatives identified for the City, and through the pro forma for consultation formally submit a response to the cultural partnership.

Brian Mitchell explained that the tasks for the Strategy were to place culture 'centre stage' at an exciting point in Coventry's development, provide a programme around which the whole sector could combine and identify partnership opportunities to widen access to, and the impacts of, culture. In addition, Brian outlined the strategy development process, the aim and priorities of the Strategy and the initiatives that would help to deliver those priorities.

The Board questioned Alice and Brian on aspects of the Strategy, particularly in relation to what involvement Warwick and Coventry Universities had had with it. Alice reported that both universities featured as major partners in the consultation and their feedback would be valuable.

Members also enquired as to what was expected to be achieved through the implementation of the Strategy. Alice explained that it was hoped to ensure that cultural services were placed at the centre of the City's growth rather than being seen as an add-on.

**Creative Cultures**

# **Coventry Cultural & Events Strategies**

**August 2007**

# Coventry Cultural & Events Strategies

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## **COVENTRY CULTURAL STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Coventry Cultural Partnership**

This strategy has been produced by the Coventry Cultural Partnership. This is an organisation that brings together the range of organisations and people who are involved in delivering or promoting cultural services to the City of Coventry.

The Coventry Cultural Partnership sits alongside a number of City-Wide Partnerships in Coventry. The partnerships are set up between Public Services, Local Industry and Community Organisations under the umbrella of the "Coventry Partnership". All of these Partnerships are supported by the City Council who have endorsed this strategy. The cultural strategy links to other strategies that have been produced by other Partnership Groups – most notably the Community Safety Partnership, the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Older People's Partnership.

The Cultural Partnership have followed the guidance that has been given from the Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport, in order to provide a framework for this strategy. There has been wide consultation with a range of stakeholders. The key part of this strategy is what we propose can be done to improve the cultural offer in the City in such a way that more people will take part and will enjoy the experience. Actions for the future are contained in the final section of this report.

It is expected that this strategy will be reviewed by the Cultural Partnership at least once a year with a report produced on progress against the agreed actions and in demonstrating the outcomes achieved. It will also be refreshed and reviewed each year as the cultural offer develops in response to customer expectations and demands and any changing circumstances in the City.

### **What is culture?**

There is a wide definition of cultural activity. It may be described as all the things people might do to have fun. It includes:

- the performing and visual arts, craft and fashion
- media, film, television, video and language
- museums, artefacts, archives and design
- libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- the built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- sports events, facilities and activities
- parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- tourism, festival and attractions
- informal leisure pursuits

### **Culture and Coventry's future**

Coventry has an exciting future as a prosperous 21<sup>st</sup> century city – and culture can play an essential role in achieving this prize. Coventry is in the midst of a £8bn city-wide regeneration scheme and the message of this cultural strategy is that Coventry's cultural

sector – its people, facilities and activities – is poised to make a unique and essential contribution to Coventry's development and the quality of life of its citizens.

### **Coventry on the move**

Coventry economic and social position is improving after a long period of stress. For example:

- Coventry's population is now rising and its employment levels are reaching those of earlier decades
- The city has an increasingly diverse community and a national reputation as a place of relative harmony
- Coventry is only one of six cities in England where the proportion of young people in the population is rising
- Coventry has been identified by Central Government as a growth area and could see an increase in population to 370,000 whilst serving a wider hinterland of over one million
- There are some signs that the gap between the more deprived communities, designated as priority neighbourhoods, is being reduced.

### **Culture meeting the needs of a growing city**

Coventry's cultural provision is already making substantial strides to meeting the needs of a growing city, for example:

- The Ricoh Arena offers a major sports and events centre within two hours drive for 75% of England's population
- Major developments are taking place at two of Coventry's cultural gems, the Belgrade Theatre and The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum
- Events such as the Godiva Festival, International Children's Games and Jazz Festival are putting Coventry on the map
- The two Universities, Coventry and Warwick, are leading exciting new creative projects building on the city's reputation for innovation and technological design
- Coventry's Transport Museum is one of the best in the world and is strengthening its role as Coventry's major visitor attraction
- Coventry Cathedral is poised to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2012 signalling its position as an international symbol of peace and reconciliation and an icon for the city
- An increasingly strong and varied group of cultural practitioners and programmes are bringing innovative and inclusive cultural activities to city residents – including those in deprived neighbourhoods – and visitors alike.

### **The role for culture and the Cultural Strategy**

The past two decades have seen an enormous investment in culture across the UK, as realisation dawns that quality of life is essential in creating vibrant, competitive and successful towns and cities. In Coventry well over £100m has been invested in cultural facilities over the last decade, including external funding from a variety of sources such as the National Lottery.

Cultural involvement can bring benefits to both individuals and communities, creating a sense of well-being and pride in our city and in being a Coventrian. Culture embraces a

wide variety of activities, places, values and beliefs that contribute to a sense of identity and well-being for everyone in our communities. Culture is about our way of life and our quality of life – it is about what people actively choose to do, rather than have imposed on them.

The aim of this Cultural Strategy (and its accompanying Events Strategy) is to maximise the benefits to Coventry and its communities from further cultural development. Other cities such as Leicester, Nottingham, Newcastle and Gateshead give strong examples of what can be achieved through the placement of culture at the forefront of development and with leadership firmly convinced of the power of culture to transform places and lives.

### **Access to culture in Coventry**

Coventry people and visitors to the city already enjoy a great deal of cultural activity. Each year, for instance, over two million visits are made to libraries, 1.7m visits to sports centres and golf courses, and nearly 300,000 visits are made to the Transport Museum.

Compared to other Metropolitan areas, Coventry people make good use of visits to museums and libraries and a high number of school children are involved in group visits. Whilst 70% of Coventrians are satisfied with their libraries and 69% with parks and open spaces, only 50% are satisfied with sports facilities and with theatres – although these figures differ only slightly from other comparable places.

Projects like Bookstart and initiatives by our major cultural facilities are also increasing access to culture. The recent Household Survey shows, for the first time, a decreasing gap in participation in cultural activities between our priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city.

### **The view from Coventry**

One of the most consistent views of those consulted for the strategy was that Coventry feels as if it is **stuck with an outdated, industrial, manufacturing image** – and that other cities have moved ahead. Yet there was almost unanimous praise for **Coventry as a relatively harmonious place**, which had welcomed incomers throughout its history and maintained a positive attitude towards an increasingly diverse community.

Despite this 'image' problem, those consulted saw the **growing network of cultural facilities and activities within Coventry as a definite strength**. But **weaknesses in cultural provision** were also recognized with Coventry Sports Centre, voluntary sports club provision, lack of access to school-based facilities, the limited role of the city's heritage and lack of spaces for rehearsal, production and display highlighted.

The growing focus on the **creative and cultural business sector** and new initiatives by the two universities was welcomed and **Coventry's events** including Godiva and the Jazz Festival were widely praised.

The **city centre** was seen as a weakness by many, particularly in the evenings and in its ability to attract visitors, although **the role of CVOne** in managing and promoting the city was widely praised. And despite the current concerns, many are optimistic and see the improving city centre as contributing to the successful growth of the city as a whole with its cultural offer playing an indispensable role in attracting and retaining businesses, visitors and local people.

There were also concerns about **Coventry as a sub-regional centre**, needing to promote its role, for example, in community-based sports events without trying to compete with the regional and national provision offered by Birmingham and the NEC.

And a constant theme in consultation was the complaint that **people do not know about the range of cultural activities and opportunities in the city centre and beyond** – despite the current and past efforts to promote the city and its activities.

### **The opportunities for culture**

Alongside these and other concerns there is, nonetheless, widespread recognition of the opportunities for culture in Coventry, including:

- the **planned growth of the city** with an expanding population, more diverse city centre both physically and economically, and the opportunity for public art to bring a new 'buzz' to life in Coventry
- the **development of cultural and creative enterprise** with Coventry's strengths in design and innovation supporting individuals and businesses in this sector
- building **links between the two universities, schools and colleges to develop creativity and creative business** to retain graduates and strengthen the economy
- Coventry's status as a **world centre of peace and reconciliation** and its relative **social and ethnic harmony** with the Cathedral could make a distinctive Coventry contribution to the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad
- Coventry is (demographically speaking) a **relatively young city**, and with the growth of newly established communities is getting younger, offering a real chance to **focus on young people** and their future creative role in the city
- the growth of **major events** at the Skydome and the Ricoh Stadium, the continued success of existing events like Godiva and the Jazz Festivals, a **growing city centre programme of animation** and a **more co-ordinated promotion of the City's heritage** to attract visitors and shoppers
- improved **community facilities** may be possible in, for example, the **Building Schools for the Future** programme and the Council's planned review of community centres though this will require the addition of external funding for sports and arts facilities such as the Football Foundation and there will be opportunities for the development of community-based activities which are **networked with the City Centre**
- **new partnership opportunities** for linking culture with a wide range of regeneration, community safety, health, education and environmental initiatives.

### **The Cultural Strategy's aim and guiding principles**

The **aim for the Cultural Strategy** is to ensure that culture plays a leading role in delivering the Council's vision for Coventry:

*"Coventry to be a growing accessible city where people choose to live, work and be educated and businesses choose to invest".*

Culture has a unique and irreplaceable contribution to make in securing this vision. Cultural development will impact on the economy and the quality of life of everyone – Coventrians and visitors alike.

Its **guiding principles** are to:

- **focus on the 'big issues'** that affect the cultural sector and which offer the maximum opportunity for strengthening culture across the city
- **build on Coventry's strengths, address the existing opportunities** and identify the objectives against which present levels of resourcing need to be measured
- **be ambitious and aim for distinctiveness**, innovation, high quality and high profile
- **seek to increase participation** in all forms of cultural activity particularly by priority groups and priority neighbourhoods
- **recognise that all stages of cultural 'production and consumption'** need to be addressed if a strong cultural sector is to be developed in the city
- **initiate a process to strengthen the leadership** for and understanding of culture's contribution to the future development of Coventry.
- **ensure effective mechanisms for communication** and implementation of its objectives across stakeholders and the wider community.

The Cultural Strategy will need to be **actively supported by many organisations** - public, private and community-based - and it will be **led by the Cultural Partnership** which is part of the wider Coventry Partnership.

### **Five priorities for the Cultural Strategy**

To fulfil its aim the Cultural Strategy proposes five policy priorities. These are:

#### **A. Develop the new Creative Coventry**

Culture has a vital role to play in Coventry's future as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city. The development of creative and innovative businesses can help secure it a stronger place within the knowledge-based global economy. The development of a robust and vibrant cultural sector will make it attractive to the new businesses and creative people who will help Coventry thrive

#### **B. Raise Coventry's profile with the community and visitors**

Culture in Coventry needs to raise its own profile and project an image of quality, distinctiveness, excitement and innovation. It needs to fulfil its potential role in promoting the city as a place to live, work, visit or do business in and in creating a vibrant cultural life for its communities and those attracted to the city. It needs to bring a greater degree of co-ordination to

promoting the city and its culture – presenting a coherent vision and driven by renewed confidence in Coventry's future

**C. Connect the city's culture to the local neighbourhoods**

The cultural sector and its partners need to address the negative perceptions of culture in Coventry and the gaps in participation in cultural activities or access to cultural opportunities, particularly in the priority neighbourhoods. There need to be chances for participation, volunteering and employment in and enjoyment of a wide range of cultural activities, celebration and showcasing of local and diverse cultural expression and the development of pride in the city's cultural activities

**D. Make the city centre a vibrant centre of culture**

Cultural activity can help Coventry's city centre become a more attractive place for local people, increase numbers of visitors and address the many negative perceptions currently held about it. In the daytime and especially in the evening culture can enhance the quality and excitement of the built environment, bring animation to its streets and malls, encourage a wider range of users and uses and project a positive image of Coventry's diverse communities and innovative culture.

**E. Contribute to social inclusion and community cohesion across the City.**

Ensure that activities that contribute to the cultural offer also offer sustained opportunities for those who may be less advantaged through their economic position, their age or through their disability. To ensure that the cultural sector is contributing to lower crime rates, increasing community cohesion and contributing to a greater recognition of the different cultural backgrounds that makes up the City.

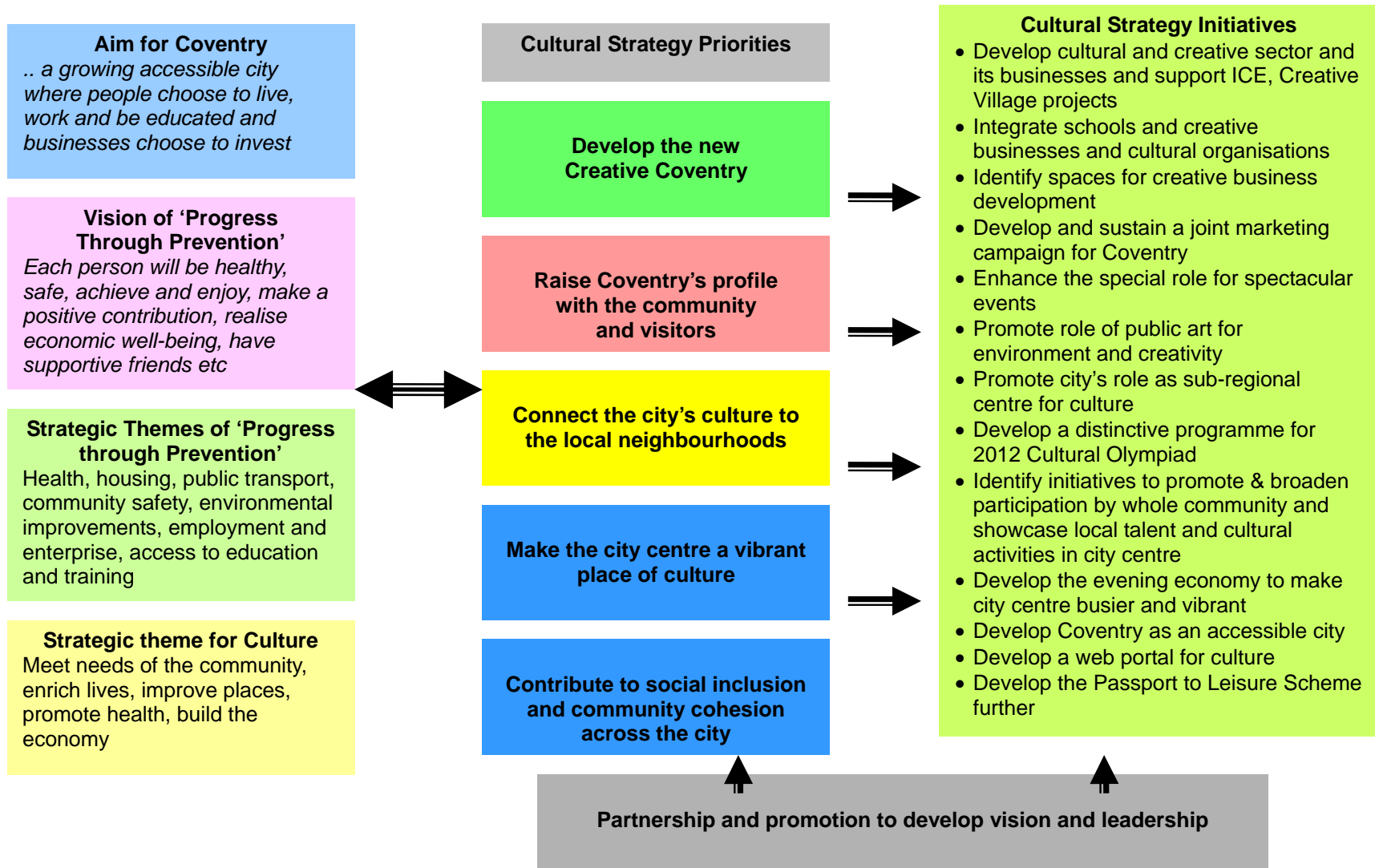
**Initiatives to achieve the Cultural Strategy priorities**

Working with its partners, Coventry's Cultural Partnership will focus on 12 initiatives to develop and strengthen the cultural contribution to the development of the city and the quality of life of its communities. They are:

- Work with the Universities and other partners to **develop the cultural and creative sector and its businesses** that are a crucial part of the new economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Work to **create links between Coventry's schools and colleges and creative businesses and cultural organisations** to ensure local people share in the growth of the new 'knowledge economy'
- **Identify new spaces which creative and cultural organisations** in the city can use to grow and develop their activities
- Develop a high profile and carefully targeted **joint cultural marketing campaign** that will ensure both residents and visitors are aware of Coventry's exciting cultural scene

- Enhance the **special role for spectacular events** in representing Coventry at its best
- Promote **exciting and innovative public art** that will enhance the quality and interest of the city and express its creativity
- Promote the city as a **cultural leader in the sub-region** of which it is the natural capital ensuring people look to Coventry as a key centre
- Develop a **distinctive programme for the 2012 Olympiad** including the Cultural Olympiad beginning in 2008 and which can build on Coventry's unique status as a centre for Peace and Reconciliation
- Promote and support initiatives and resources that broaden **participation by Coventry's increasingly diverse community** ensuring good access to city centre and local facilities and showcasing local talent
- Develop the **evening economy** to make the city centre a busier and more vibrant place where everyone will feel safe and excited to visit
- Make Coventry **an accessible city** welcoming to local people, those with special needs and visitors alike with good transport, signage and inclusive provision
- Develop a **'One-Stop' online portal for Coventry's culture** at which residents and visitors can access cultural facility and activity web-sites and which can be used to promote a higher profile for a dynamic and inclusive cultural sector in the sector.
- Develop the Passport to Leisure Scheme further with partners, **extending eligible populations, and improving the activity range**

The diagram shows how the cultural strategy priorities and the initiatives will link to key community priorities for the city.





### **Action for and outcomes of the Cultural Strategy**

A Provisional Action Plan has been developed by the Cultural Partnership as a basis for discussion with, **and commitment by, key partners**. These discussions will follow formal adoption of the Strategy by the Council. **The Action Plan sets out a programme** to take place over the next five years with an indicative timescale for each action.

The Cultural Partnership will **lead the process of implementation, review and development of the Action Plan with its partners**. It will work closely with lead partners, monitor the results of agreed actions and initiatives, liaise with the full range of partners identified in the plan, and identify and agree new initiatives with them.

The Cultural Partnership and its partners will work alongside other initiatives by the Council and its partners to **achieve outcomes** which will include:

- increased level of recognition of Coventry's cultural facilities and activities (i.e. we now know that something is happening!)
- increased satisfaction with the city's cultural facilities
- broadening participation rates in cultural activities of all kinds
- reductions in inequalities in participation
- increases in city centre usage, dwell times and spending
- increases in visitor numbers to the city
- increases in cultural businesses being established and operating in the city
- improved graduate retention rates
- raised earned income by cultural organisations
- increased school and community linked activity levels
- increased % take up of Passport to Leisure from the eligible population
- contributing to lower crime rates in the City, especially among young people.

# COVENTRY CULTURAL STRATEGY

## 1. Why a cultural strategy?

### 1.1 Culture's Contribution to Coventry's Future

Coventry has an exciting future as a prosperous 21<sup>st</sup> century city – and culture can play an essential role in achieving this prize. Coventry is in the midst of a £8bn city-wide regeneration scheme and the message of this cultural strategy is that Coventry's cultural sector – its people, facilities and activities – is poised to make a unique and essential contribution to Coventry's development and the quality of life of its people.

Coventry has been identified by the government as one of five growth points in the UK and it is creating a strong basis for the cultural development and enrichment of the city, for example:

- The Ricoh Arena offers a high quality sports stadium for Coventry City FC, for major events, conferences and for community activities – readily accessible to the city and within a two hour drive for 75% of the population of England
- Major developments are taking place at two of Coventry's cultural gems, the Belgrade Theatre and The Herbert Museum and Art Gallery – which will provide exciting new facilities and services in each
- Events such as the Godiva Festival, International Children's Games and Jazz Festival bring together the local community and visitors to celebrate the best of local and world-wide talent - putting Coventry on the map
- Coventry University's Innovation and Creative Enterprise academy (ICE) and Warwick University's Science Park are drawing on the city's skills and reputation for design and innovation to promote new cultural and creative businesses in the city, encouraging the emergence of new cultural entrepreneurs
- Coventry's Transport Museum is one of the best in the world and continues to build on its position as Coventry's major visitor attraction and one of the most popular in the region alongside Coventry Cathedral, renowned as an international symbol of peace and reconciliation and an icon for the city
- An increasingly strong and varied group of cultural practitioners and programmes which are bringing innovative and inclusive cultural activities to city residents – including those in deprived neighbourhoods – and visitors alike. For example, the Creative Partnerships' work with schools, the Library Services' Reading Imagination Cafes, the Positive Images Festival, local sports activities such as the Race for Life and a host of community events.

These and many other cultural strengths and developments will link to the continued improvements in the city, including the first city centre IKEA store, to create a vibrant and attractive centre for local people and increasing numbers of visitors.

## 1.2 What We Mean by 'Culture'

What does this strategy mean by culture? First, culture is used as an **inclusive concept** that embraces a wide variety of activities, places, values and beliefs that contribute to a sense of identity and well-being for everyone in our communities.

Culture is about our way of life and our quality of life – it is about what people choose to do - cultural services and activities are the ones people opt for rather than have imposed on them.

As the starting point for Coventry's Cultural Strategy we will follow the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's widely established **definition or understanding of culture** set out in '*Creating Opportunities*' (DCMS, 2000), the guidance for Local Cultural Strategies. In this definition:

Culture encompasses the following types of activities - an illustrative, rather than exhaustive, listing. It includes:

- the performing and visual arts, craft and fashion
- media, film, television, video and language
- museums, artefacts, archives and design
- libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- the built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- sports events, facilities and activities
- parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- tourism, festival and attractions
- informal leisure pursuits

Culture is also about:

- relationships - between individuals and groups
- shared memories, experience and identity
- diverse cultural, faith and historic backgrounds
- social standards, values and norms
- what we consider valuable to pass on to future generations.

Coventry's cultural strategy draws on and includes all these aspects of its culture.

## 1.3 Culture – the Future of our Cities

The past two decades have seen an enormous investment in culture across the UK, as realisation dawns that quality of life is essential in creating vibrant, competitive and successful towns and cities. In Coventry, well over £100m has been invested in cultural facilities over the last decade including external funding from a variety of sources such as the National Lottery.

In adopting its Cultural Strategy, Coventry will maximise the benefit from further cultural development. Other cities such as Leicester, Nottingham, Newcastle and Gateshead

give strong examples of what can be achieved through the placement of culture at the forefront of development and with leadership firmly convinced of the power of culture to transform places and lives.

#### 1.4 The Positive Impacts of Culture

Cultural development is not just important for the future of Cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Evidence of culture's beneficial impacts on people and communities is growing, for example:

- The **Positive Futures** programme (Home Office and Crime Concern) has shown that young people involved in sport have improved education attainment and have improved family and community relations
- The **Study of the Effects of the Visual and Performing Arts in Healthcare** carried out at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital (1999 – 2003) found that patients involved in music and visual arts activities benefited from decreased pain and depression and from shorter hospital stays
- In addition, there are more than **30 studies** which show how exposure to nature quickly decreases stress and reduces pain, slowing respiration and lowering blood pressure. The importance of access to green space is essential to the well-being of all our communities
- **Sport Playing its Part** was produced to provide senior officers with an advocacy toolkit that provides evidence of the contribution which sport and active recreation can make to social, economic and environmental outcomes and shared priorities of local and central government. It was prepared by Sport England, DCMS and LGA and has four key strands;
  - Building safe, strong and sustainable communities
  - Meeting the needs of children and young people
  - Healthier communities
  - Economic vitality and workforce development
- **Creative Consequences**, a study established by Essex County Council shows that the arts in Essex provide good value for money and a financial return on public investment: each pound invested from the public purse achieves a return of £3.17
- **Bookstart**, the national programme to encourage all parents and carers to enjoy books with children has successfully contributed to show how improving children's language and literacy skills can contribute to tackling social exclusion, and influencing how children's services are delivered.
- **Renaissance in the Regions** has commissioned research into visitors to the West Midlands from MORI in 2004, and which included the Herbert Art Gallery. This demonstrated high levels of visitor satisfaction on whether they had enjoyed their visit (97%), and with 81% feeling they had gained new knowledge and understanding, though there were a lower proportion of first time visitors than to museums in other regions and also fewer from overseas.

## **1.5 What the Cultural Strategy will do**

Coventry's Cultural Strategy focuses on those issues and opportunities around which all of those involved in cultural provision, of whatever kind, can come together to make effective decisions about its future.

The Strategy's objectives and recommendations seek to ensure that culture plays a full role in making Coventry a vibrant, tolerant and enjoyable place to live, work or visit.

## 2. The starting point – Coventry and Culture

### 2.1 Coventry's Participation in Culture

Coventry people and visitors to the city already enjoy a great deal of cultural activity. Each year, for instance, over two million visits are made to libraries, 1.7m visits to sports centres and golf courses, and nearly 300,000 visits are made to the Transport Museum.

Coventry's latest Household Survey for 2005-2006 provides an insight into how much Coventry people get involved in cultural activities and what they think of the provision in their city. For example:

- 50% participate in active sports at least 12 times a year, whilst 35% participate in arts events at least twice a year
- 46% make at least one visit each year to a museum whilst 44% visit an art gallery or an historic site.

We can compare Coventry with other Metropolitan authorities in terms of how many cultural visits are made per 1,000 population. These figures from the 2004/5 Best Value Data from the Audit Commission show that Coventry's cultural participation is relatively high.

	<i>Met Average</i>	<i>Coventry</i>
Visits to Museums in person	643	1070
Visits to Libraries	5371	6579
No of pupils in school trips	12,928	22,154

Satisfaction levels with Coventry's cultural provision however vary but are not too different from other comparable places. 70% of Coventry people are satisfied with their libraries, which have benefited from an extensive refurbishment programme over the last seven years, 69% are satisfied with parks and open spaces, 50% with sport and leisure provision and 50% with theatres.

These figures can be compared with other Metropolitan areas which show that the level of satisfaction with sport and leisure is 5% under the average Metropolitan area, Parks and Open Spaces are 6% under, with libraries just 1% under. Coventry scores above the mean Metropolitan area averages for Theatres and Concerts (by 1%) and for Museums and Galleries (by 4%).

Coventry holds extensive knowledge in relation to the activity patterns of young people aged 11 – 16 years. Communities that Care (CtC) is a long term preventative programme. It identifies key risk and protective factors for any given community of children and young people and then introduces a range of effective interventions. These seek to reduce the risks of problem behaviours, including youth crime, drug abuse, school age pregnancy and school failure.

Significant information is available based on a 10,000 strong dataset from the Communities that Care research conducted in 2004-6:

- 9 in 10 (89%) of children & young people indicated that there were lots of chances to get involved in sports/clubs in break and after school.

- Girls (91%) were significantly more likely than boys (87%) to say there were opportunities to get involved in sports/clubs.
- Year 7/8 pupils were significantly more likely than Year 9-11 pupils to say there were opportunities to get involved in sports/clubs.
- In terms of ethnicity, boys from the Indian (53%) and White & Black Caribbean (53%) and White (52%) community were most likely to have been to a leisure centre. The least likely were Pakistani (20%) and Bangladeshi girls (14%). This may be for cultural reasons.

## **2.2 Increasing Access to Culture**

There are some instances in which Coventry's level of cultural participation is above that of similar areas in the UK, but there are still lower levels of participation in Coventry's priority neighbourhoods than in the rest of the city. However, there have been some real successes in increasing access to cultural opportunities, for example:

- Bookstart – meeting the needs of the younger population has achieved 67.2% take up for 18-month olds (national benchmark 26%) and 100% for 3-year olds (national benchmark 40%)
- Participation in education programmes at The Herbert - which stand at 16,225 in 2006/7, a rise from 7,449 in 2003/4 (although this covers a period of major redevelopment)
- Attendance at arts events in Coventry by people with disabilities has risen from 13.2% of 2005 to 19.5% in 2006
- Access to art galleries by people from BME communities at least twice a year has risen from 11.8% in 2005 to 14.8% in 2006
- Participation by people from BME communities in moderate physical activity at least three times a week has risen from 22.4% in 2005 to 41.5% in 2006.

In priority neighbourhoods, residents include activities for teenagers, facilities for young people and parks and open spaces among their top priorities for improvement to their quality of life.

There have been some activities with high local profile which have used innovative means to increase cultural participation. For example Coventry Inspiration Book Awards, a Big Brother style web site competition in which adults and children read and vote for two winning books out of a short list of over 160 in a series of eliminating votes.

## **2.3 The City Centre and Culture**

How do Coventrians view their city centre and do they see it as a place for leisure and culture? CVOne's *Annual Survey 2006* provides some answers.

- Most visitors to the City Centre are from Coventry itself and not surprisingly most were shopping
- Only 2% reported they were visiting for sight-seeing reasons and some of these were also visiting because of shopping
- Safety is an issue with 44% of respondents feeling unsafe in the evening

- Only 25% of respondents rated the City Centre as good or excellent
- Those visiting for non-shopping purposes included a great number of young people visiting for pubs, cinemas, restaurants and nightclubs.

Nearly half those surveyed had attended one of the city's events, although a surprising 36% of respondents had not attended events because they were not aware of them. Events, nonetheless, were an area of increasing satisfaction for city centre users.

## 2.5 Coventry's Cultural Provision – an overview

What are the main features of Coventry's cultural landscape? What facilities and resources are there and what range of possibilities do they offer the people of Coventry and visitors to the City? This section summarises some of the main features of and variety of cultural provision in the City (with fuller details provided in the Appendices).

### 2.5.1 Sports Provision in the City

The major **sports providers and facilities** in the City are:

- **Coventry Sports Trust** which manages the Coventry and Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre, Brandon Wood Golf Course, Ricoh Fitness facilities as well as leisure programmes for education bodies and community use of school facilities at Sidney Stringer, Foxford, Ernesford Grange and Tile Hill Schools
- **Coventry Sports Foundation** which manages three community sports facilities: Centre AT7, The Midlands Sports Centre and the Alan Higgs Centre
- **Schools**, all of which are now part of the School Sports Partnership and with Woodlands School as a specialist sports college
- **Private Health and Fitness Clubs** - there are 18 main private sector health and fitness clubs in Coventry, some of which are hotel-based
- **Other provision** which includes 23 swimming pools on school sites, 11 synthetic sports pitches and a number of sports halls plus a large number of football, rugby and cricket pitches around the City for senior and junior level use
- **Sports Clubs** – there are over 30 significant clubs in the City.

Sports provision is currently undergoing a **number of major developments**, for example:

- Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre will provide a major redevelopment including provision of a 50m swimming pool in a city centre location
- Foleshill – work is underway to look at the feasibility for a new neighbourhood facility
- Midlands Sports Centre has been re-provided at Westwood School
- A new leisure centre is planned for Wood End, Henley Green and Manor Farm as part of the New Deal for Communities Programme
- Coventry University and Henley College Coventry are planning major developments of sports and fitness provision
- The University of Warwick is developing an Indoor Tennis Centre with the Lawn Tennis Association.

The Active People survey is the largest survey of sport and active recreation to be undertaken in Europe and provides reliable statistics on participation for all 354 Local Authorities. Coventry's profile shows participation at least 3 days a week x 30 minutes of



moderate activities (all adults – 16+) to be 20.4% for people from minority ethnic communities.

Coventry is a key partner in **CSW Sport** (Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire) which is the strategic body with the delivery system for sport in the county. The partnership is the conduit between Coventry and any resources to sport distributed from the Regional Sports Board.

### **2.5.2 Arts Provision**

Well-established arts facilities and more recent arrivals in Coventry include:

- The Belgrade Theatre which on re-opening will have two auditoria and become a focal point of the Belgrade Plaza development
- The Herbert including gallery space and the Arts and Media resource
- Warwick Arts Centre and the Students' Union
- The Cathedral, including the ruins
- The City College's Butts Theatre which is to be retained and refurbished as part of the development of the site
- Coventry University's Ellen Terry performing arts space
- A range of pubs and clubs offering live music
- Skydome and The Ricoh for large concerts and gigs
- Facilities and activities at Specialist Arts Colleges based in City schools e.g. Foxford and Blue Coat Music College.

Coventry also boasts an array of organisations and individuals who are responsible for arts activity across the city (and indeed, beyond its boundaries). There are companies of all types and scale of operation, and covering all art-forms including the performing arts, events organizers, media projects and community based groups.

The city is also enlivened by a year-round programme of events, with a mix of one-off specials and annually recurrent activities (see also Events Strategy). Many of these are celebratory in nature and serve to bring communities together.

Coventry also benefits from important support services and networks which have been set up to strengthen the arts infrastructure and offer opportunities to bring arts practitioners together. These include:

- Coventry University's ICE project for creative and cultural business development
- Creative Partnerships
- Arts and Media Training AMT
- Performing Arts Service (PAS)
- Coventry Music and Artists Networks
- Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Arts Partnership
- Arts Information Centre (at The Herbert)
- 'Emerge' (published by Coventry City Council's Arts Services).

### **2.5.3 Children's Play**

Play facilities are an important part of cultural provision particularly for families with young children. Coventry City Council, along with other providers of services for

Children and Young People, has created a Play Strategy to address the needs of its young residents for enjoyable and safe play activity.

In Coventry Council provision currently includes:

- Play Centres at Foleshill and Hillfields and other equipped play areas for young children and one for older children around the City
- Teen areas with basketball hoops and shelters, skate parks and Multi Use Games areas
- Splash'n'Play Park in the Memorial Park and an adventure play area in Coombe Park
- Popular ActiveZone Summer Playschemes.

The Council is also bidding to develop six pilot informal, natural or environmental play spaces in disadvantaged areas of the City and Whitefriars Housing Group, Groundwork, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and community centres also provide play areas.

#### **2.5.4 Coventry's Heritage and Museums**

Coventry's heritage is a significant part of its cultural assets, reflecting the City's mediaeval development, its growth as a manufacturing centre and of course its losses through the Blitz in 1940 and 1941.

In the city centre the major heritage attractions are:

- The old and new Cathedrals which stand as important symbols of peace and reconciliation
- Coventry Transport Museum
- The Priory Visitor Centre and the Undercroft
- The Herbert - art gallery, museum and media centre which will also house the archive service.

Outside the City centre are the Lunt Roman Fort and the historic landscape of Coombe Park and within the city are a substantial number of historic buildings from all periods of Coventry's development.

#### **2.5.5 The Library Service**

In Coventry the Library Service has 2 million visits and issues 1.5m books each year. One third of Coventry residents – 100,000 people – used a library in 2006, and libraries reach out to all of Coventry's diverse communities, with services for children, young people and older people. Libraries also handle over 300,000 enquiries per year.

Libraries have benefited from an extensive refurbishment programme over the last seven years and its facilities and services include:

- The Central Library and sixteen community libraries
- Two mobile libraries
- Multicultural provision, including books, newspapers and magazines
- Support for eleven reading groups
- A variety of on-line resources.

Libraries also provide a wide range of cultural activities and events, both in the Central Library and in the community libraries and works with a wide range of partners. These include Imagination reading cafes with story telling and art for children, classes on family history and creative writing, and two annual events – the new Coventry Festival of Literature and Liberty, which focused on the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery in 2007, and the Holocaust Memorial Day anniversary events.

## 2.6 Resourcing Culture in Coventry

Over the last 10 years **capital investment of well over £100m** has been made in culture through the City Council and its partners including:

- Expansion of the Transport Museum - £12m
- Expansion of the Belgrade Theatre - £14m
- Development of Priory Place and Visitors Centre as part of the £32m Coventry Phoenix project
- Building of the Ricoh arena at a cost of £116m
- Expansion of The Herbert - £18.5 m
- Investment in the Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre - £5.5m to date
- New Deal for Communities in Wood End, Henley and Manor Farm to support development of a new Sports Centre - £11m
- Building a new sports centre (with Coventry Sports Foundation) to replace the Midlands Sports Centre - £8.8m
- Investment of £2.8m in parks since 2001/02
- Investment in refurbishing library infrastructure of £2.7m since 2002 and a further £3m committed to the end of financial year 2008/9

**External capital funding** has formed part of this considerable Council investment from a variety of sources including the National Lottery.

The City Council is the major revenue funder for cultural facilities and activities investing £62 per head each year on behalf of residents – somewhat below that of comparable neighbouring areas.

The City Council makes a £16.5m annual net contribution to Culture and Leisure and a £5.8 annual net contribution to Libraries in the City. This money is mainly within the Culture, Leisure and Libraries Directorate but additional resources have been committed from Children, Learning and Young People as well as smaller contributions from other Council areas e.g. Neighbourhood Management. It is estimated that other Government Bodies (The Arts Council, the Big Lottery and The Museum Hub) are putting an additional £3.3m into these Council services and activities. It is recommended that a full analysis takes place of the money that is spent from the Public Purse across the City in order to review whether the money is supporting the priorities of this strategy.

### **3. Making the Links**

#### **3.1 Facing the Economic Challenge and Opportunities for Coventry**

Coventry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century faces the challenge of all cities in the developed world – of prospering within an increasingly globalised and competitive economy where a focus on knowledge-based industry, environmental concerns and quality of life issues are of increasing importance.

Coventry has emerged from a difficult period associated with the decline in manufacturing in the 1980s. Coventry's extended period of growth, based on the flourishing of manufacturing which gave it a world-wide reputation particularly as a centre of cycle and motor production, came largely to an end. Now employment levels in the city have regained those of earlier decades and there are 20,000 more jobs than 10 years ago.

Coventry is also home to two universities, Coventry University and the University of Warwick, both of which have ambitious plans for developing their research and business related activities.

##### **3.1.1 Some Key Facts about Coventry**

A number of facts about Coventry illustrate the challenges that face it and which impact on the role that cultural development can play in the opportunities facing the city.

- After 20 years of decline Coventry's population is now rising: the 2001 census shows a population of around 300,800 – an increase of 2.3% from 1991<sup>1</sup>
- Whilst Coventry's population structure largely replicates the national picture, it has a greater proportion of young people and Coventry is one of only six cities in England where the population profile is getting younger
- About 22% of Coventry's population belong to an ethnic minority group with particularly strong Asian representation; this growing diversity has enhanced Coventry's reputation for peace-making, reconciliation and tolerance
- There are now 145,000 jobs in the city compared to 146,000 in 1981 with the substantial decline in manufacturing largely offset by a growth in the service industry
- Coventry is ranked as the 64<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority area in England (out of 354) with lower than average incomes and low car ownership being particular economic features. It has identified 31 priority neighbourhoods, primarily in the north and the east of the city, which exhibit multiple deprivation
- 31% of the population aged 16 – 74 have no qualifications – despite the presence of two universities and a growing educational sector
- Two-thirds of people with jobs in Coventry live in the city, with most of those commuting in coming from the immediate surrounding area

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<sup>1</sup> Figures drawn from Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Issues and Options, CCC May 2006

- The city is one of Central Government's New Growth Points, and could see an increase in its population to 370,000, with it serving a sub-regional population of over one million.

## **3.2 Making the Links – Coventry's Policy Priorities**

### **3.2.1 The Vision for Coventry**

The Cultural Strategy needs to support, the vision, objectives and priorities of key policies for Coventry. These are found in appendix E.

In this way it will be abundantly clear that cultural development is not just an 'add-on' or option that can be ignored or placed low on the city's agenda.

Coventry City Council has adopted a vision for Coventry:

*Coventry to be a growing accessible city where people choose to live, work and be educated and businesses choose to invest.*<sup>2</sup>

This calls for a drive to ensure that culture, knowledge-based industry and the expression and enjoyment of creativity are at the heart of where Coventry wants to be. Cultural development should take its place alongside the Council's priorities for education, health, community safety, clean and green environment and the active promotion of equality.

### **3.2.2 The strategic links for culture**

There are many strategies and policies adopted by the City Council, the Coventry Strategic Partnership and other stakeholders at local and regional levels which have influence over and connection with culture.

Common themes characterise most of the plans, which are fundamentally aiming at improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of Coventry and its people. These are most clearly expressed in the city's Community Plan: *Progress Through Prevention: Community Plan 2005-10* and *Progress Through Prevention: A refreshed Local Area Agreement for Coventry*.

In addition to *Progress Through Prevention*, the key plans which the Cultural Strategy will link with are the following:

- The Local Development Framework
- A Community Cohesion Strategy for Coventry City Council
- The Children and Young People's Plan
- Coventry Urban Design Guidance
- The Culture, Leisure and Libraries Strategic Plan and the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Libraries Draft Strategic Plan for 2007/8 to 2009/10
- City Council's Play Strategy, 'Something to do'
- City Council's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- City Council's Playing Pitch Strategy

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<sup>2</sup> Developing the City Council's Vision: Report to Cabinet, CCC December 2006

- City Council's Art, Sport and ICT Curriculum Development Plan
- City Council's Strategic Arts Policy
- City Council's Performance Venue Strategy
- City Council's Heritage Strategy
- City Council's Library Service Plan
- The Coombe Country Park Management Plan.

Aims and ambitions of other major players in the city are set out in plans for Coventry Transport Museum, Coventry Cathedral and Creative Partnerships. For example. Coventry's Community Plan sets out the shared priorities for culture, and the importance of visitor attractions which are not managed by the Council, notably the Cathedral, are recognized in the Tourist Strategy and Action Plan for Coventry, whose latest version appeared in 2003. The 'Space of Possibilities' joint work through Creative Partnerships, Arts and Media Training and Imagineer in 2006-7 has ensured that evidence from young people is gathered and incorporated into the cultural strategic objectives. There are explicit links to the power of culture to increase activity levels, and deliver directly the Children and young People's Plan in terms of the "Enjoy and Achieve" and "Positive Contribution" themes.

The most significant of the regional plans are:

- Advantage West Midlands: *An overview of delivering advantage: The West Midlands Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2004-2010*
- Culture West Midlands: *Cultural Life in the West Midlands: Vision and Aims, Regional Cultural Strategy 2001 – 2006*
- Sign Up For Sport – A Regional Plan for Sport in the West Midlands 2004-2008
- Arts Council England (West Midlands): regional delivery of 'Our Agenda for the Arts 2006 – 2008'
- Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) West Midlands: priorities for the region
- Advantage West Midlands: *West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy*.

### **3.2.3 The strategic ambitions for Coventry**

These are most clearly expressed in *Progress Through Prevention*, in which it is stated simply that 'Each person in Coventry will:

*Be healthy  
Keep safe  
Achieve and enjoy  
Make a positive contribution  
Realise economic well-being  
Have supportive friends, families and communities'.*

The underpinning principles are those of equality and the need to address disadvantage across the city.

Its strategic themes look to Coventry's communities benefiting from:

- Healthier lives with more rapid improvements in the priority neighbourhoods
- Better quality housing with a better mix of type and tenure of housing in neighbourhoods
- Improved public transport particularly for priority neighbourhoods

- Increased community safety with less crime and anti-social behaviour
- Environmental improvements including more attractive parks and open spaces
- Improved employment and building up an enterprise society including stimulating the knowledge-based economy
- Encouraging access to education and training and provide people with the skills for business success, innovation and growth.

The Community Plan's strategic theme on Culture sets out as priorities to:

- ensure that Coventry's cultural life meets the needs of communities
- enrich individual lives, strengthen communities, improve places where people live, promote health and build the local economy through the city's cultural life.

The Plan also identifies the major 'Communities of Interest':

- Children and young people
- Older People
- Physical and Sensory Impaired People and those with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

A full account of the strategic context for culture is included in Appendix E.

## 4. The View from Coventry

### 4.1 Consulting Coventry

What are the views of those with a stake in the future of Coventry including people and organisations within the cultural sector itself? Coventry's cultural sector, like the city as a whole, is on the move. But in many cases this is taking place in a fragmented way, without an overview or strategic plan. One view that was frequently and consistently expressed was the need for a Cultural Strategy to bring together and provide a focus for stakeholders in the city's future, seizing upon its many cultural opportunities

A large number of people and organisations, within the cultural sector and in related sectors such as education, economic development and regeneration, and community development have been consulted both as individuals and as groups in developing the Cultural Strategy. They are listed in appendix F. The Strategy also builds on the extensive community consultation carried out in 2001 for the previous cultural strategy.

Whilst there is, of course, no absolute unanimity about cultural provision in Coventry, many common themes emerged – based on the shared experience of living and working in the city.

### 4.2 Culture in Coventry today – the views of those consulted

One of the strongest responses concerned **how Coventry sees itself and the relative success of other places**. For example:

- some think that Coventry feels as if it is stuck with an outdated, industrial, manufacturing image – and that other cities have moved ahead
- its location near other cultural 'big hitters' strengthen this sense of inferiority, symbolised in a city centre that lacks buzz
- Coventrians are still reluctant to sell themselves and their city – amongst themselves, as well as to the outside world
- culture in the city is widely perceived in a negative or limited way with local audiences that are not familiar or comfortable with the new or innovative.

Yet there was almost unanimous praise for Coventry as a relatively harmonious place, which had welcomed incomers throughout its history and maintained a positive attitude towards an increasingly diverse community.

Despite this 'image' problem, those consulted saw the **growing network of cultural facilities and activities within Coventry as a definite strength**:

- the 'great leaps of faith' which established the major cultural facilities in a earlier period are being matched with more recent developments and refurbishments
- there is also strength in community-based facilities, the local libraries, an informal network of pubs and clubs supporting live music, local sports clubs and facilities and small theatres for example.



But there are **weaknesses in this facility infrastructure**:

- the Coventry Sports Centre is in need of renewal along with other facilities at a local level
- Voluntary sports club provision is in need of revitalising
- the Cathedral and much of the heritage of the City is playing too limited a role for local people and visitors
- there are doubts that University and school-based facilities and activities are truly accessible to those who neither study nor work there
- there are gaps in provision of creation, rehearsal and production spaces, contemporary exhibition facilities for artists and craftspeople, and affordable, flexible spaces for local heritage groups
- there are facility weaknesses in some neighbourhoods, with limited community and sports provision all of which limit access to cultural opportunities for many residents
- there was a recognition that facility planning has in the past been based on targeting opportunities for funding rather than supporting an agreed overall strategy.

There is, however, a **growing focus on the importance of creative and cultural business** and on training. The two Universities are taking a leading role in this, with the ICE project at Coventry University being set up to build a source of excellence to take Coventry's traditional background in design and related skills into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The cultural infrastructure, of course, extends well beyond its buildings – interviewees pointed to **the strengths of the programme of events within the City and its growing range of organisations and networks supporting cultural development**. These include:

- major events, like Godiva and Jazz Festivals, are placing Coventry on the map
- there is a strong tradition of 'urban culture' in Coventry, reflected in music, MCing, and graffiti art
- new theatre groups have emerged
- an innovative events organisation, Imagineer, has established itself and programmed a community opening of the Ricoh Stadium
- National, sub-regional events such as UK School Games, Coventry half marathon and the Race for Life
- the Creative Partnerships programme is linking Coventry schools with creative and cultural organisations, businesses and individuals
- BBC Coventry and Warwickshire promotes local heritage and other cultural activities
- voluntary sector groups representing Coventry's diverse communities (such as the Muslim Resource Centre or Minorities in Europe UK) support a range of cultural activities
- the Coventry Performing Arts Service provides activities, resources and advice to the city's schools and communities.

**Outreach work was seen as a strength** (within the limits of funding): the Library Service supports story-telling and art workshops in local libraries and other venues and many cited the quality and range of outreach work undertaken by the Belgrade Theatre, Warwick Arts Centre, Arts Exchange and The Herbert amongst others. But the need to **address 'people development' and develop the skills and experiences** to empower local people to develop cultural activities within their communities was stressed. In sport

the city has been successful in bidding and delivering projects such as Positive Futures which has received regional and national recognition in engaging with difficult communities using sport.

**The role of the City Centre** emerged as a contentious issue with many of those interviewed:

- the current state of the city centre is seen as a serious weakness, particularly in the evenings when the preponderance of young and alcohol-fuelled groups and a lack of restaurants and cafes are felt to be off-putting to many
- the ring road is felt to act as a barrier to movement and there are limited bus services
- the city centre is weak in attracting visitors with limited or inadequate marketing of its cultural attractions and its heritage beyond the Cathedral
- some pointed to difficulties of signage and navigating around Coventry's distinctive pattern of routes and public spaces.

However, there was widespread recognition of the value of CVOne as a single co-coordinator of city centre services, praise for events and street activities organised by them and appreciation of physical improvements to the public realm and the retail centres. And despite the current concerns, many are optimistic and see the improving city centre as contributing to the successful growth of the city as a whole with its cultural offer playing an indispensable role in attracting and retaining businesses, visitors and local people.

Some of those consulted raised the **role of Coventry as a sub-regional centre**, for example with its role in community-based sports events seen as an example of taking a positive approach without trying to compete with the regional and national provision of sporting and music events provided by Birmingham and the NEC.

A constant theme in consultation is the complaint that **people do not know about the range of cultural activities and opportunities in the city centre and beyond**. Some point to the lack of joint marketing by cultural bodies, although this is now being partially addressed by the Council and the Cultural Partnership.

There is a general recognition that the many successes of the ad hoc and even opportunistic approach which had underpinned some of the substantial development to date would **need to be developed into a more strategically led approach**. Views included:

- culture needs to build on its recent successes and progress to make and win the argument for the key role it should play in the City's future
- strengthened and improved leadership for culture **across** the city needs to be encouraged
- the establishment of the Cultural Partnership as part of the Coventry Partnership is greatly welcomed, but does not yet fully represent the whole cultural sector, with libraries, sport and the private sector notable areas of weakness

- work has commenced to develop improved linkages between the Council and the two Universities, and in joint marketing between the main cultural institutions and this needs to be built on
- sub-regional links between Coventry and its surrounding hinterland are limited. However Coventry has played a critical role in the evolving CSW Sport from its former role as Active Sports Partnership.

The further growth and development of the City – which will demand a commensurate expansion of cultural provision – will in turn result in even greater need for strategic planning and leadership for culture.

The **financing of culture** is, unsurprisingly, seen by many of those interviewed as a major issue. Views included:

- recognition of the increasing pressure on all local authority funding generally and of culture in particular when faced with other national and community led priorities
- the reliance on uncertain and often short-term external funding for development of new projects, of outreach work or for innovation – whether by the existing ‘flagships’ of culture or newly emerging organisations.
- the management of capital funding linked to regeneration initiatives has appeared to be excessively bureaucratic and inflexible, discouraging some small-scale and emerging community projects from obtaining the funding they need
- Coventry University’s ICE project and the Arts and Media Training programme have begun a process of developing opportunities for creativity and creative businesses which will need to be built on if this sector is to play a significant role in the city’s future development
- major events such as the Godiva Festival, street activities and local neighbourhood activities always face a challenge in placing themselves on a sustainable basis particularly since they have few or no opportunities to levy entry or participation charges
- there is limited sponsorship throughout the sector and this is recognized as a national issue although also perhaps also reflecting the decline of Coventry’s industry (and its limited role in the city’s cultural provision)
- the small scale of the visitor economy, except for major festivals and for free visits such as to the Transport Museum, also limits the funding available to the cultural sector as a whole.

#### 4.3 Culture in Coventry - the Opportunities

Many of those consulted drew attention to multiple opportunities for culture in Coventry's future development and in establishing it as a place where everyone has the potential to enjoy a good quality of life.

- many pointed to the **planned growth of the city** with a growing population, more diverse city centre both physically and economically, and the opportunity for public art to represent a new 'buzz' to life in Coventry
- a second significant platform for culture in the city's growth and development is seen in the **development of cultural and creative businesses** with Coventry's strengths in design and innovation supporting individuals and businesses in this sector
- building **links between the two universities, schools and colleges to develop creativity and creative business** was seen as one way to help retain the graduates which the city often loses
- many point to Coventry's status as a **world centre of peace and reconciliation** and to its relative **social and ethnic harmony** with the Cathedral, linked to a distinctive Coventry contribution to the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad
- In response to the success of gaining the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games Coventry has played a lead role in the region to develop opportunities to encourage more people to become active and encourage more volunteering.
- Coventry is (demographically speaking) a **relatively young city**, and with the growth of newly established communities is getting younger and there is a real chance to **focus on young people** and their creativity through projects such as Creative Partnerships
- the growth of **major events** at the Skydome and the Ricoh Stadium, the continued success of existing events like Godiva and the Jazz Festivals, a **growing city centre programme of animation** and a **more co-coordinated promotion of the City's heritage** are all seen as offering potential to develop the **visitor economy**, as well as attracting more of Coventry's and the sub-region's shoppers to the city centre
- improved **community facilities** may be possible in, for example, the **Building Schools for the Future** programme and the Council's planned review of community centres though this will require the addition of external funding for sports and arts facilities such as the Football Foundation and there will be opportunities for the development of community-based activities which are **networked with the City Centre**
- above and beyond the potential identified here, those consulted also pointed to **new partnership opportunities** within and across cultural sectors and for **linking culture** with a **wide range of regeneration, community safety, health, education and environmental initiatives**.

## 2.4 The Views of Young People

### 2.4.1 Coventry as a Space of Possibilities

Coventry's Space of Possibilities project (by Creative Partnerships in collaboration with Common Purpose, Talking Birds and Imagineer) provides an extraordinary vision of how young people view Coventry – powerful, playful and with an amazing understanding of what makes a city worth living in.

Thirteen schools were involved in the project, both primary and secondary, with children aged 5 - 15. The overall aim was to use arts as a way of promoting discussion with young people about their vision of what Coventry might become, and to examine how it is at present. The children were asked what excited them about Coventry, what they thought excited other people and how they wanted their city to make them feel.

They visited parts of the city, discussed their issues and concerns with a range of adults, including Cllr Gary Ridley (former Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Libraries), staff from the Cathedral, the BBC, Coventry Tourist Information and the Priory Place visitor centre. As a result of the project, the young people involved have suggested ten possibilities for a newly reinvigorated city – with culture as the driving force. They wanted Coventry to be a place:

- that is "Green" and is contributing to the environment
- to have a good and varied social life
- that is easy to get about
- where you can have fun
- where it feels good to live
- with interesting places to visit
- with good places to take the family together
- in which it is safe to live
- where we can be proud to live
- that celebrates success

## 4.4 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

These views have been summarised in the SWOT table below – providing the starting point for the Cultural Strategy.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location and transport links</li> <li>• Ongoing regeneration programmes and projects</li> <li>• Strong communities and good community relations</li> <li>• City centre cultural facilities and city centre management</li> <li>• Community facilities and outreach work</li> <li>• Events, music and local performance scene</li> <li>• Design excellence and ICE cultural business initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative perceptions (internal and external) about the City and culture</li> <li>• City Centre lacks 'buzz' and variety</li> <li>• Weakness in facilities and opportunities in some neighbourhoods and for development</li> <li>• Lack of strategic direction and leadership for culture including the Council</li> <li>• Marketing and visitor economy including Cathedral role as icon for Coventry</li> <li>• Limited funding and sponsorship for new developments</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two first class Universities &amp; college sector</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth of the City, diversification of the city centre and its population profile</li> <li>• Creative business development and the evening economy</li> <li>• 2012 and Coventry as world centre for peace and reconciliation</li> <li>• Development of the visitor economy through promotion of cultural activities and heritage</li> <li>• Raising city profile through spectacular events, iconic structures</li> <li>• Partnership with education, community, health sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure of ambition and vision resulting from inability to make a strong case for culture</li> <li>• Weakness of leadership and partnership working</li> <li>• Other priorities lead to lack of resources for securing cultural impacts</li> <li>• Failure to connect with Coventry's communities and raise participation and support levels</li> </ul>

## 5. The Strategy for Culture in Coventry

### 5.1 Guiding Principles for the Strategy

This is a strategy for action and for building up partnership capacity and commitment to take that action. It is based on a small number of important guiding principles. The Cultural Strategy will:

**focus on the 'big issues'** that affect the cultural sector and which offer the maximum opportunity for strengthening culture across the city, enhancing its impact on local communities as well as the proposed growth and development of Coventry

**build on Coventry's strengths, address the existing opportunities** and identify the objectives against which present levels of resourcing need to be measured. It will not rule out initiatives requiring new resources, but will focus on making the best use of what is already in place

**be ambitious and aim for distinctiveness**, innovation, high quality and high profile, but none of this needs be in conflict with inclusiveness – indeed, quality and distinctiveness will come from capitalising on widespread community involvement and access, building an active and equitable base for cultural development across the city

**seek to increase participation but focus on the outcomes achieved** from all forms of cultural activity particularly by priority groups and priority neighbourhoods

**recognise that all stages of cultural 'production and consumption'** need to be addressed if a strong cultural sector is to be developed in the city

**initiate a process to strengthen the leadership** for and understanding of culture's contribution to the future development of Coventry. It will aim to identify champions in all fields, across generations, social and ethnic groups

**ensure effective mechanisms for communication** and implementation of its objectives across stakeholders and the wider community.

### 5.2 Who Needs to be Involved in the Strategy?

The Cultural Strategy is for the city as a whole. It will succeed only if it is actively supported by:

- cultural bodies and providers in the private, voluntary, trust and public sectors
- educational bodies including the two Universities, colleges and schools
- Council based cultural services including sports, heritage, libraries and arts
- CVOne and the retail and business sector in the City
- Coventry City Council regeneration, economic development and planning services
- elected members of Coventry City Council
- CSW Sport the Sub-regional sports partnership
- Community and club based sports organisations

- community organisations representing neighbourhoods, faith and ethnic groups and communities of special interest such as those groups representing people with disabilities
- the local media, print and broadcast
- regional agencies responsible for culture, tourism and economic development.

Whilst many of these bodies are involved with cultural development in some form, and others like MLA West Midlands have actively indicated they would wish to be involved, others are not. A key task will be to address the lack of involvement of some groups, for example the private sector, both within the Cultural Partnership and the city-wide initiatives that this strategy proposes.

The Cultural Strategy will be led by the Cultural Partnership which is part of the wider Coventry Partnership. The Coventry Partnership will be responsible for ensuring that culture links with other theme areas of the Partnership's work to play its role in securing quality of life for all of Coventry's communities.

## **5.5 The Priorities for Culture in Coventry**

To fulfil its aim of supporting Coventry – both city centre and the wider local authority area as 'a growing accessible city where people choose to live, work and be educated and businesses choose to invest', the Cultural Strategy proposes Five policy priorities. These are:

### **A. Develop the new Creative Coventry**

Culture has a vital role to play in Coventry's future as a 21<sup>st</sup> century city. The development of creative and innovative businesses can help secure it a stronger place within the knowledge-based global economy. The development of a robust and vibrant cultural sector will make it attractive to the new businesses and creative people who will help Coventry thrive.

### **B. Raise Coventry's profile with the community and visitors**

Culture in Coventry needs to raise its own profile and project an image of quality, distinctiveness, excitement and innovation. It needs to fulfil its potential role in promoting the city as a place to live, work, visit or do business in and in creating a vibrant cultural life for its communities and those attracted to the city. It needs to bring a greater degree of co-ordination to promoting the city and its culture – presenting a coherent vision and driven by renewed confidence in Coventry's future

### **C. Connect the city's culture to the local neighbourhoods**

The cultural sector and its partners need to address the negative perceptions of culture in Coventry and the gaps in participation in cultural activities or access to cultural opportunities, particularly in the priority neighbourhoods. There need to be chances for participation, volunteering and employment in and enjoyment of a wide range of cultural activities, celebration and



showcasing of local and diverse cultural expression and the development of pride in the city's cultural activities

#### **D. Make the city centre a vibrant centre of culture**

Cultural activity can help Coventry's city centre become a more attractive place for local people and increasing numbers of visitors and address the many negative perceptions currently held about it. In the daytime and especially in the evening culture can enhance the quality and excitement of the built environment, bring animation to its streets and malls, encourage a wider range of users and uses and project a positive image of Coventry's diverse communities and innovative culture.

#### **E. Contribute to social inclusion and community cohesion across the City.**

Ensure that activities that contribute to the cultural offer also offer sustained opportunities for those who may be less advantaged through their economic position, their age or through their disability. To ensure that the cultural sector is contributing to lower crime rates, increasing community cohesion and contributing to a greater recognition of the different cultural backgrounds that makes up the City.

### **5.6 Working to Achieve the Priorities – the Cultural Strategy Initiatives**

How are the Council, the Cultural Partnership, and the wider group of stakeholders going to work to achieve these five priorities? The Strategy proposes the following initiatives:

#### **Initiative 1**

**Plan with the Universities and other partners in the sub-region ways to facilitate and support the development of the cultural and creative sector and its businesses**

This work could be formalised as a Cultural and Creative Industries Strategy. The key steps are to investigate the needs of and the potential for growth of creative business and link cultural and creative industry development to the city's growth and development plans including the Local Development Framework and regeneration programmes and to regional initiatives. The plans should set out a vision for a new creative economy-based Coventry that will inspire and gather widespread support and understanding.

Coventry is already taking important steps to promote cultural industries and to grow some of the innovative creative businesses in the city. Support for Coventry University's ICE academy and Warwick University's Creative Village and similar projects should seek to identify how the approach and benefits of these projects can be extended, both to attract incoming creative business and support the development of local cultural entrepreneurs.

#### **Initiative 2**

**Develop a programme to integrate Coventry schools and colleges with creative businesses and cultural organisations**

Local people need to share in the development of the creative and knowledge-based economy and schools and colleges offer an obvious route to achieve this. A programme to encourage and link local young people to creative opportunities could build on the success of Creative Partnerships, School Sport Partnerships and successor projects, and also link with the Youth Service and community organisations.

The aim should be to identify ways in which young people and people from the community can be linked to cultural and creative providers and businesses through work placements and a wide range of school links with the creative sector.

### **Initiative 3**

#### **Identify spaces which could be used to encourage the development of creative businesses and cultural organisations**

This initiative could address the current shortage of cultural development spaces, enliven the city centre and other areas and facilitate the growth of local creative entrepreneurial activity. It should be undertaken with Council planning and asset managers, CVOne City Centre Operations Group, developers and property owners. This should seek both short and medium term spaces for production, rehearsal, storage, display and sale in, for example, empty shops, other temporarily vacant buildings and in and around the ring road. It should also address the longer term shortage of cultural development space through establishing partnerships with developers to identify opportunities for facilities.

### **Initiative 4**

#### **Develop and sustain a joint cultural marketing campaign for Coventry's growing cultural attractions**

This campaign should be aimed at local people, visitors and businesses and individuals who can be attracted to the city, to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the new and improved cultural facilities, open or shortly to open (including the Ricoh Arena, Transport Museum, Belgrade Theatre and The Herbert) and the existing cultural facilities such as the Cathedral. It can build in the experience of previous campaigns such as the 2005 'Summer of Cov' and subsequent campaigns and should stress the range and quality of cultural facilities now available within the city for both residents and cultural visitors alike. It must present an up-to-date image for Coventry and be connected with wider regional campaigns to raise participation and engagement.

### **Initiative 5**

#### **Enhance the special role for spectacular events in representing Coventry at its best.**

Events are a strength in Coventry and an effective way of presenting a vibrant image of the city and celebrating its own and world-wide culture, and of involving local people and attracting visitors alike. The events programme should build on already successful events including Godiva and Jazz Festivals, Mystery Plays, National and sub-regional events such as the International Children's Games UK Schools Games and community sports events and major Ricoh Arena events and with creative events organisers, Imagineer. The aim should be to develop sponsorship and support which can sustain spectacular and special events – representing Coventry at its best.

### **Initiative 6**

**Actively promote public art to enhance the quality of the city's environment and express the city's creativity.**

Public art can play a powerful role in further enhancing the city centre and the neighbourhoods. It can offer the opportunity for community involvement and expression and bring together a wide range of partners. A strategy for public art should be linked with the city's Supplementary Planning Document for the Local Development Framework and should seek to enhance the city centre, the neighbourhoods, and the area around the ring road with work at community level and also iconic structures capable of attracting international attention. It should be linked to visitor and local community participation initiatives to heighten enjoyment of the city and the benefits that could flow from a high quality programme of public art.

**Initiative 7**

**Promote the city's role as a sub-regional centre for culture**

Coventry needs to improve its role within the sub-region for which it is a natural capital. This could be achieved, for example, with programmes to increase the use of its cultural facilities as conference or event locations. Existing events such as the CVOne Godiva Awards, the partnership with CSW Sport sub-regional sports awards, planning for a 2012 legacy which cover Coventry's cultural and business hinterland should be supported and extended if possible along with other celebratory and other events which can enhance Coventry's role within the region and the benefits of a vibrant cultural scene.

**Initiative 8**

**Develop a distinctive programme for the 2012 Cultural Olympiad in which Coventry can build on its status as a centre of Peace and Reconciliation**

Coventry has a unique position in the world and it should build on this to explore how it can make a distinctive contribution to the 2012 Olympiad which begins in 2008 and for the Olympic year itself 2012. This should bring together the Council, the cultural sector and all those concerned with the promotion of the city with the Cathedral, ethnic and faith groups and international links established through twinning, to develop a programme for 2012 and promote the City's reputation as a place of relative harmony and mutual respect alongside the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the new Cathedral.

**Initiative 9**

**Identify initiatives and resources that can promote cultural opportunities for the whole community and broaden cultural participation**

Coventry's increasingly diverse communities need local and improved access to the city's growing cultural facilities and activities. The Cultural Partnership has already adopted targets for broadening participation and reducing the gap between priority neighbourhoods and other parts of the City and these should be pursued as part of the strategy.

Increasing participation can be achieved by a range of programmes such as promoting outreach activity by cultural flagships to local neighbourhoods, 'twinning' of neighbourhoods with cultural organisations, supporting locally-based sports, arts and media initiatives, and heritage projects that link local people with their family and city

history. Also continuing successful targeted intervention programmes to combat crime and antisocial behaviour, improve health and educational achievement.

The use of events and the city centre can also contribute to increasing participation and local involvement. The enhanced cultural activities within the city centre should include providing a showcase for local talent and diverse cultural expression. This should be led by CVOne, working with Imagineer and other cultural and community organisations to enhance the current range of events featuring local groups and projects. This programme can include performances, sports demonstrations, craft fairs, art exhibitions – building on the example shown by the Ricoh opening event to promote and involve the wide range of cultural activities taking place throughout the city.

There could also be work with the voluntary and private sports clubs to develop effective sustainable club-school links. This should be linked to the Council's planned review of community facilities and also the Cultural Partnership's 'Closing the Gap' targets in addition maximising the opportunity that Building schools for the Future presents.

#### **Initiative 10**

##### **Develop the evening economy in the city centre making it a busier and more vibrant place**

The initiative takes the opportunity presented by the opening of new and improved cultural and retailing facilities to address the serious negative perceptions and issues relating to the City centre. The planning for enhancing the evening economy should bring together the City Council, CVOne, catering and retailers, police, and city centre cultural providers to promote safe and enjoyable use of the city centre for local people and visitors.

#### **Initiative 11**

##### **Develop and promote Coventry as an accessible city**

Coventry can work to achieve distinction as an accessible city, welcoming to local people, those with special needs and visitors alike. The Council, CVOne, transport providers and cultural bodies should work with people who have physical and sensory impairments, young people, ethnic and faith groups and anyone not currently using the city centre as they might to identify transport, signage and other issues that should be tackled to promote greater access to the city. Develop the Passport to Leisure Scheme, extending the eligible population and improving the activity range.

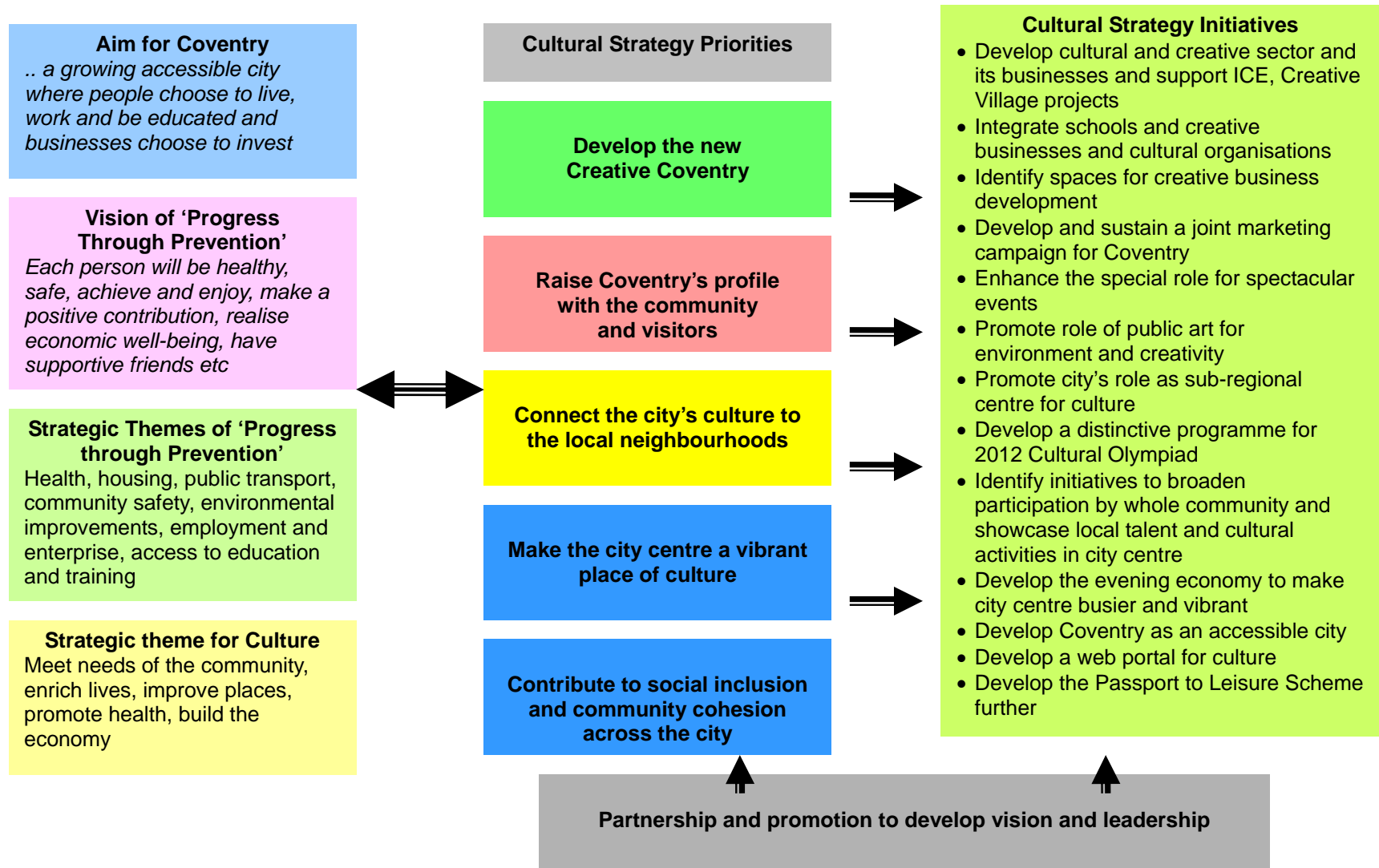
#### **Initiative 12**

##### **Develop an online Web Portal for Culture, which can be linked to the Council's Coventry Active data base**

A developing cultural sector needs a single online portal at which residents and visitors can access cultural facility and activity web-sites and which can be used to promote a higher profile for a dynamic and inclusive cultural sector in the sector. The portal could also offer an opportunity for developing web-based networking activities by and for cultural practitioners.

*The following diagram shows how the Cultural Strategy's Five priorities and these initiatives link to Coventry's community vision and priorities.*

**Making the links – Coventry’s community priorities and the Cultural Strategy Objectives and Initiatives**



## 5.7 Organising to undertake these initiatives

Leadership and organisation are critical to the success of this programme. How are they to be developed? The Cultural Strategy proposes the following organisational steps and promotional activities:

**Initiate a discussion with key partners, led by the Cultural Partnership, to assess what organisational means can most effectively secure support for and implementation of the priorities set out in the Cultural Strategy.** This might include, for example, the establishment of a small development group that includes key members from all sectors of the cultural economy, and the development of 'Cultural Champions' for the city who will promote the role that culture can play in its future development.

**Promote the case for culture through media, seminars and conferences.** The Cultural Partnership and the Council could, for example, work with their University partners to develop a high profile conference on creativity and the city in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a way of launching its new vision.

**Ensure young people's direct and active involvement in the strategy implementation process is secured** through projects like *The Space of Possibilities* which could be linked to resources like the Youth Opportunities Fund to build a sustainable and effective 'voice' for young people in Coventry's cultural future.

**Work with other Coventry Partnership Theme partners** to empower community sports, arts and other cultural activity targeted at priority areas and community-led initiatives.

## 5.8 Targets for the Cultural Strategy

The actions set out in the Action Plan will have achievement of a range of outcomes for the city and its communities. The strategy will work alongside other initiatives by the Council and its partners to achieve outcomes which will include:

- level of recognition of Coventry's cultural facilities and activities (i.e. we now know that something is happening!)
- satisfaction with the city's cultural facilities
- broadening participation rates in cultural activities of all kinds
- reductions in inequalities in participation
- increases in city centre usage, dwell times and spending
- increases in visitor numbers to the city
- increases in cultural businesses being established and operating in the city
- improved graduate retention rates
- raised earned income by cultural organisations
- school and community linked activity levels
- increased % take up of Passport to Leisure from the eligible population
- contributing to lower crime rates in the City, especially among young people.

Baselines for each target are set out annually, through the Cultural Partnership, and progress monitored.

## **5.9 Action Plan**

A Provisional Action Plan has been developed by the Cultural Partnership as a basis for discussion with and commitment by key partners. These discussions will follow formal adoption of the Strategy by the Council. The Action Plan sets out a programme to take place over the next five years with an indicative timescale for each action.

The Cultural Partnership will lead the process of implementation, review and development of the Action Plan with its partners. It will work closely with lead partners, monitor the results of agreed actions and initiatives, liaise with the full range of partners.

**This Action Plan will be reviewed by the Cultural Partnership after one year of its initiation in September 2007 and will be updated as appropriate. It will be subject to annual review and updating thereafter.**



	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead &amp; Partners</b>	<b>Outputs &amp; resources</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1	Plan with the Universities and other partners in the sub-region ways to facilitate and support the development of the cultural and creative sector and its businesses	<p>Carry out research/review to Identify barriers to development and needs of creative/cultural businesses in Coventry (and allowing for sub-regional offer)</p> <p>Develop co-ordinated action on resource support, business support, to the sector and practicing artists etc</p> <p>Support Coventry University's ICE project and the Creative Village and other business initiatives by Warwick University</p>	<p><b>Coventry University</b>  <b>University of Warwick</b>  WCC  Business Link Gateway  Regional agencies including Screen West Midlands, AWM  ACE WM  Neighbouring Las  CCC Economic development</p>	<p><i>Increased numbers, range and scale of creative and cultural businesses</i></p> <p>Partner resources, external funding for research</p> <p><b>Impact Measure: economic development – number of creative businesses in Coventry</b></p>	To Sept 2010
2	Develop a programme to integrate Coventry schools and colleges with creative businesses and cultural organisations	<p>Develop wider programme of co-ordinated placements and work experience with whole range of cultural bodies</p> <p>Review other initiatives including Building Schools for the future to include all schools and colleges</p>	<p><b>CCC Educational Advisory Service (including Performing Arts Service)</b>  Specialist status schools  Cultural facilities offering placements and involved in project work  ALISS (Artists and learning in schools scheme)  Creative Partnerships (or successor projects)  Colleges, other schools  ICE</p>	<p><i>Increased numbers of placements for young people</i></p> <p><i>Increased interest in careers in cultural sector</i></p> <p>Partner resources</p> <p><b>Impact Measure: number of graduates staying in Coventry</b></p>	<p>Sept 2007 – Sept 2008</p> <p>To Sept 2010</p>
3	Identify spaces which could be used to encourage the development of creative businesses and cultural organisations	<p>Investigate opportunities for spaces and buildings and develop and publicise guidance to support creative and cultural businesses in finding premises – drawing on the analysis of needs carried out in 1 above</p> <p>Identify and establish models of good practice for a) temporary use of vacant properties (eg shops, other spaces) for artists and arts practitioners to develop and sell work and b) develop productive relationships between business, land and property developers and the creative sector</p>	<p><b>CCC Property Services</b>  <b>Arts and Business WM</b>  CCC Economic development, planning and regeneration depts.  CVOne  ACE WM  ICE  Cultural Partnership  Private developers</p>	<p><i>Increased numbers of businesses and scale of cultural business</i></p> <p>Partner resources</p> <p>Potential development partner resources</p> <p><b>Impact Measure: economic development – number of creative businesses in Coventry</b></p>	<p>To Sept 2010</p> <p>Sept 2007 – Sept 2008</p> <p>To Sept 2010</p>

4	Develop a joint cultural marketing campaign for Coventry's growing cultural attractions	Work with the City Centre Marketing Group to develop campaigns targeted at selected internal and external audiences	<b>CVOne</b> City Centre Marketing Group Cultural providers/facilities Heart of England Tourist Board	<i>Increased visitors to city and to cultural attractions</i>  <i>Higher profile with city</i>  <i>Increased knowledge of events and provision</i>  Partner resources External funding  <b>Impact Measure:</b> <b>participation in cultural activity as measured by the GHS</b>	To Sept 2010
5	Enhance the special role for spectacular events in representing Coventry at its best.	Review feasibility of developing a world class event for the city at least biennially which can promote city on a bigger scale whilst retaining community linkages	<b>CVOne</b> City Centre Marketing Group Cultural providers/facilities Heart of England Tourist Board	As above  <b>Impact Measure:</b> <b>economic development – investment measure of event</b>	To Sept 2010
6	Actively promote public art to enhance the quality of the city's environment and express the city's creativity.	Embed provision of innovative public art within relevant planning policies including LDF  Promote use of local artists for public art including through web listing (see 13)  Facilitate access to public art – through joining with walking programmes, City literature and tours  Review possibility of incorporating innovative public art as part of the new city 'gateway' station development	<b>CCC Planning Dept</b> Cultural Partnership CVOne CCC Arts Development Developers ACE WM Public Art agencies Arts Exchange Coventry	<i>National recognition of Coventry public art</i>  <i>Increased satisfaction of visitors and community with city centre</i>  Partner resources Developer funding  <b>Impact Measure: Amount of public art in the City (it is accepted that this enhances the quality of life)</b>	To Sept 2010       To Sept 2012

7	Promote the city's role as a sub-regional centre for culture	<p>Secure places on sub-regional partnerships</p> <p>Identify sub regional audiences we want to target</p> <p>Use of Cultural Champions</p> <p>Extend and promote Godiva, sports awards to promote and celebrate cultural innovation</p>	<p><b>CVOne</b>  Destination Management  sub-regional partnerships  Advantage West Midlands  Cultural Partnership  Coventry University</p>	<p><i>Increased visitors from sub-region</i></p> <p><i>Increased recognition and satisfaction with Coventry cultural provision</i></p> <p>Partner resources  <b>Impact Measure: visitor economy measures</b></p>	<p>To Sept 2010</p> <p>To Sept 2012</p>
8	Develop a distinctive programme for the 2012 Cultural Olympiad in which Coventry can build on its status as a centre of Peace and Reconciliation	Initiate discussion led by Cultural Partnership with CVOne, Cathedral and other key partners on ambition for 2012	<p><b>Cultural Partnership</b>  <b>CVOne</b>  Cathedral  AWM  CSWP – 2012 co-ordinator for sub region and region  Major cultural facilities  Universities  Faith groups  CCC</p>	<p><i>Raised international profile for Coventry</i></p> <p><i>Raised profile as part of 2012</i></p> <p>Partner resources  Possible external funding</p> <p><b>Impact Measure: economic impact measures of events</b></p>	<p>Sept 2007 – Sept 2008 for initial planning</p> <p>To Sept 2012</p>
9	Identify initiatives and resources that can promote & broaden cultural opportunities for the whole community and increase cultural participation	<p>Adopt Cultural Partnership targets to narrow the gap of inequality in terms of cultural participation across the City</p> <p>Develop a programme that showcases local talent and cultural activities in the city centre</p>	<p><b>Cultural Partnership</b>  CCC  CVOne  Delivery bodies</p>	<p><i>Targets as set by Partnership</i></p> <p>Partner resources &amp; external funding</p> <p><b>Impact Measure: General Household Survey - % gaps narrowed</b></p>	To Sept 2012

10	Develop the evening economy in the city centre making it a busier and more vibrant place	CVOne to establish a 'night-time economy group' to facilitate joint planning and joint action – with links to marketing group	<b>CVOne City Centre cultural facilities</b> Police CCC Economic Development Cultural Partnership	<i>Increased numbers and range of users in city centre</i>  <i>Decreased fear of crime in evening</i>  Partner resources  <b>Impact measure: no of users, dwell times in city centre</b> <b>Satisfaction with city centre</b>	To Sept 2010
11	Develop and promote Coventry as an accessible city	Initial review of signage and development of innovative ideas possibly linked to public art initiatives  Development of Passport to Leisure Scheme, to increase eligible populations and activity range	<b>CCC City Development</b> CVOne Disabled People's Groups Cultural providers  CCC Culture & Leisure Passport partners	Partner resources  <b>Impact measure: Satisfaction with city centre, usage by whole community</b> <b>Impact Measure: % take up of passport scheme from eligible populations</b>	To Sept 2010
12	Develop an online Web Portal for Culture, which can be linked to the Council's Coventry Active data base	Review existing good practice, agree format, set up project plan, and costings	City Marketing Forum Cultural Partnership CVOne	Increased participation  Partner resources, CCC development resources  <b>Impact measure: Increase in those with information on cultural opportunities</b>  <b>Increase in participation</b>	To Sept 2010

# **Coventry Cultural and Events Strategies August 2007**

## **Appendices**

- A: Coventry Events Strategy
- B: Case Studies
- C: Overview of Cultural Participation
- D: Summary of Views from Consultation
- E: Overview of the Policy Context for the Strategies
- F: List of Individuals Consulted

## **Appendix A**

# **Coventry Events Strategy**

## **1. Events and Coventry**

Events offer an inclusive, accessible, local opportunity for cultural activity. They bring the local community together and attract visitors to the City. As with other cultural activities they can link with and support a range of community objectives including strengthening community cohesion, building a sense of pride of place, encouraging access to the public realm, and help promote initiatives which improve quality of life.

For a local authority such as Coventry City Council, hosting or organising events bring together many services both within and outside the Council. Whilst cultural services or providers or local community organisations will have the significant role in initiating events and hiring or providing the key activities, the planning and delivery of events crucially involves other public services including Street Cleansing, Waste Services, Licensing, Traffic Management, Environmental Protection, Food Safety, Health and Safety and Emergency Planning.

## **2. Defining Events**

### **2.1 What do we mean by events?**

Events take place throughout the year and throughout the world. Some are known throughout the world because of the way they are marketed - for example, tennis at Wimbledon, the Carnival in Brazil, or the Tour de France. They give a place a profile. At a local level and no less important for those attending and taking part, are the school nativity play, celebrating the local rugby club's centenary, or the village fair.

All have one thing in common: they are one-off occasions in the year's calendar and for those who organise, take part and attend, they bring a special reward - opportunities to escape the routine of everyday life, to live rather than just exist and above all else, have fun.

Events can be totally free-standing, unrelated and unconnected to any strategies or policies the Council have produced and endorsed. They are judged by both the audience and those who determine the allocation of Council resources as an entertainment; something to amuse the public at large. Conversely, they can be seen as a powerful tool to promote an idea, educate, create employment or deliver the desired outcome of a strategic objective.

### **2.2 Regular and special events**

It is important to differentiate between events and regular or routine entertainments and sport. In the events industry, events are often referred to as Special Events and this is the key to defining them: events are something different, they are something out of the ordinary, and they are something special.

Special Events are occurrences which do not happen every day of the week or on a regular basis. They can be sport related: although Coventry City FC playing on a regular basis in the league at the Ricoh stadium would not be considered a special event, their appearance in the FA Cup final would be. This is because football is played on a regular basis, at many different levels throughout the country but there is only one FA Cup final - a unique occasion. Similarly, horseracing is staged throughout the country every week of the year, and there are still special events in the racing calendar, most notably the Grand National run at Aintree – for many years a must-see event which the entire population of Britain is aware of.

Special Events are about taking a regular activity outside its usual setting and presenting it in a new environment so as to create greater interest, or appeal to a wider audience. A good example is “Shakespeare in the Park”. Rather than stage the production indoors at an established theatre, instead at the height of summer use an outdoor venue with a stately home as a backdrop or using boats on a lake as props. It then becomes a special production, something more likely to be remembered by those attending. Special Events can be about using spaces for something other than their routine or intended purpose.

Events are often centered upon anniversaries, celebrations and religious festivals and are frequently organised by non professionals, e.g. someone whose day job is different from the role they take in putting on the local community festival.

There are, of course, professional organisers whose living comes from organising community events and larger productions. There are commercial companies who seek to use public open space to stage events such as circuses or funfairs where their aim is commercial gain. Charities, too, stage events to raise funds for their particular cause.

Leaving aside those of national importance and staged for commercial gain, events can be characterised as:-

- one-off happenings, possibly annually, but not routinely week after week
- taking place on public open space
- mostly free to the public
- having a main, non-commercial objective
- often organised by grant funded performance art and production companies, charities, community groups and clubs
- celebrations or anniversaries
- using a space for something other than its everyday principal purpose.

Above all they are something different, they are something unusual, they are something exciting, giving audiences a unique experience and memory to tell their friends and family just how good it felt.

### **3. Making Events in Coventry**

#### **3.1 The main providers and facilitators of events in Coventry**

Probably the best way to categorise the events is by organiser, promoter or facilitator. For the purpose of the Events Strategy, the performance of plays in purpose-built theatres, conferences in the Ricoh or bands playing regularly in pubs are not considered as events. Nor are regular week-in, week-out sporting fixtures, amateur or professional. One-off events such as the National School Games or charity fun runs should be included, however.

The **major cultural providers of events** are:

#### **The Council's Events Office within Culture, Leisure and Libraries**

- a year-round programme held in the parks of family fun days, fairs, festivals, charity and community sports days and runs and public celebrations facilitated by the events office
- Events Office budget used to pay for infrastructure such as stewarding, toilets etc. Licensable activities staged using premises licence held by the Events Office
- all of which is free to attend and is aimed at residents, with the objective of providing days out and building community cohesion
- a full list of the events is published both on the Council's website and as a paper brochure
- they are also helping to facilitate events to animate the city centre for the National School Games 2007, and are advising and helping The Transport Museum and The Herbert to put on events in the spaces outside their premises.

The Council also co-ordinates and supports city-wide events such as Peace Month (in October) and Black History Month (November).

#### **The Council's Rangers team within Culture, Leisure and Libraries**

- a year-round programme held in the parks of activities with an environmental, and sustainability theme
- the costs are the staff time of the three rangers. All the activities are free or at low cost to cover any materials used, for example to make nesting boxes
- objectives are educational and providing young people with interesting activities
- also offer local communities opportunity to care for their environment with events such as Canal Clean Up.

#### **CVOne - The Council's city centre management and promotion contractor**

- organiser of the two major annual events which attract a regional and national audience: the Godiva Festival and the Coventry Jazz Festival. Repeated on a similar formula year on year. Plus a range of events in the city centre designed to animate it.



- Council pays CVOne a fee to organise and run events
- the former is free and aimed at residents, attracting an audience of 70,000 over three days. The latter is held at a number of indoor venues and because of the quality of the musicians attracts a national audience
- CVOne is also the gatekeeper for small-scale events who want to use public open space in the city centre within the ring road, for example gospel singers or larger events by others such as Coventry University's Summer Ball held in the Cathedral grounds.

### **Imagineer - a Coventry-based Production and Promotions Company**

- although created at the beginning of 2007, the two founders and directors of Imagineer have undertaken outreach projects for many years from the Belgrade Theatre, organising new and innovative productions with local artists and community groups
- resourced by grant funding and sponsorship, they produce events including the Coventry Carnival which are free to the public
- their objective is to produce high quality work, such as the Mystery plays, the opening ceremony for the International Children's Games, other innovative work, and to involve and promote local talent.

### **Ricoh Arena**

- although completed in 2006, the official opening was in February 2007. The venue is a top quality exhibition and conference space with associated hotel and fitness and sports stadium. The home of Coventry City Football club, the arena itself can be used for major outdoor events and rock concerts for up to 40,000 people
- Coventry City Council and the Alan Higgs Charity formed a joint venture company for this £113 million project, which has 15 sponsors and partners
- one of the principal sponsors is the Japanese-owned company, Ricoh. Events are resourced and operated on a commercial basis

### **Coventry Transport Museum**

- a wide range of events the largest of which is the annual Festival of Motoring plus participation of exhibits in other events around the City.

### **The Belgrade Theatre**

- the high profile Mysteries plays are presented every three years plus a major event each year in the Cathedral ruins.

### **Warwick University**

- **One World Week:** runs annually in January (for one and a half weeks), with 20,000 in attendance: world's largest student-run festival, with performances, film, a forum on political debate, a mini sports Olympics and an international food festival

- **Warwick Students Arts Festival** in June: campus-wide and student-driven, it is open to audiences from the city
- The Students' Union provides staging, lighting and sound for community festivals
- The University hosted the International Children's Games in 2005 and is bidding to host events and teams for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

### **Community Festivals**

- Positive Images Multicultural Festival and Refugee Week (see Case Study)
- Earlsdon Festival
- Foleshill Festival
- Hillfields Gala Day
- Willenhall Festival
- Caribbean Festival
- Longford Fayre
- Holbrooks Festival

Among the key **facilitators of events** are:

### **The City Services Directorate and the Events Safety Group**

Events in public places require support from the City Services Directorate if they are to take place in safety and without excessive disruption or damage. For Coventry events therefore the role of the City Services Directorate of the Council is critical and events are likely to call on the services of some or all of Street Cleansing, Waste Services, Licensing, Traffic Management, Environmental Protection, Food Safety, Health and Safety and Emergency Planning.

The services of the Directorate play a very active part in the **Safety at Events** group, which brings together Police, Fire, Risk Management, CVOne (as the major events organiser in the city), St John Ambulance, and a range of other partners, to ensure that the major events happening in the City have safety planning very much at their heart. A significant part of one of the team's time is spent overseeing the planning of events, examining the event safety manuals and responding to emergency incidents during and out of hours.

The Events Safety Group have also published an excellent guide for events setting out how to tackle the various permissions required and providing advice on the whole process of planning and mounting events

*The main events taking place in Coventry this year can be found on the City Council and CVOne websites.*

## **4. The Issues for Events in Coventry**

### **4.1 The Context - the Legal Framework**

In order to explain the issues which are pertinent to events in Coventry, it is first necessary to set out the legal framework relevant to events as a whole, and then examine the impact.

#### **Landlord's Consent**

Practically all the events as defined for this strategy take place on public open space, all of which is controlled by the local authority. Events may take place on the public highway if an appropriate road closure order is obtained in advance. Permission is granted by the Highway Authority and in reality, this again means the local authority. In order to stage any event there is a legal requirement to obtain landlord's consent.

#### **The Licensing Act 2003**

The most significant change for outdoor events in the last two years has been the introduction by central government of the Licensing Act 2003 and this came into force in November 2005. The law now requires all events, regardless of admission policy, which have live or recorded music, performance, film or dance to apply and gain a premises licence.

The Licensing Act 2003 gives statutory bodies and interested parties (e.g. residents and businesses in the immediate vicinity upon whom the event might impact) the right to be consulted and to be allowed to make representations at licensing hearings. The key change for events since November 2005 is that public consultation is now a statutory duty. Agencies and the public can make representations (objections) to an event going ahead. In order to stage any public event involving regulated entertainment (ie music, dance, sale of alcohol, hot food after 11pm), where numbers attending will exceed 500, there is a legal requirement to obtain a Premises Licence for the venue. Smaller events, where those attending will not exceed 499 may be held under a Temporary Event Notice, which involves consultation with the Police only.

Coventry City council had adopted controls over outdoor public entertainment under the previous legal regime (Local government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1982).

#### **Other Statutes Requiring Compliance**

Events invariably involve work activity: the building of stages, placing of barriers, rigging of PA systems, and as such are subject to the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act 1974 and its associated regulations and Approved Codes of Practice, most notably The Event Safety Guide, HSG 195.

Events, which are often held outdoors, need to comply with the Environmental Protection Act 1990, particularly with regard to noise.

Similarly the Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty upon the local traffic authority to manage their road network. They must achieve, so far as may be reasonably

practicable (having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives) the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network.

Lastly, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on councils to have contingency plans in place for coping with potential emergency situations which could endanger life or disrupt the normal fabric of society.

#### **4.2 Key Issues for Events - Meeting Statutory requirements**

The introduction of additional statutory instruments by central government in the last four years has created more pressure upon event organisers (primarily from the Licensing Act 2003 and to a lesser degree - dependent upon their interpretation - the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004). This legislation has now been in place for some years and those organising events are coming to terms with making it work.

Coventry City Council controls all of the public open space and is, therefore, the body from which event organisers need to gain landlord's consent. CVOne is currently the premise license holder for the City Centre area. In addition the Council fulfils many other roles for which it needs to meet statutory requirements.

For events Coventry City Council is:

- the **licensing authority** and the body from whom event organisers need to gain a **premises licence**
- the Highway authority
- the enforcing agency for licensing
- the enforcing agency for Health and Safety
- the responsible authority where environmental health, trading standards and planning departments are statutory consultees

To help events organisers to prepare adequately for events the Council's Events Safety Group have published a clear and concise **Event Safety Guide**. This provides excellent advice on meeting legal obligations including obtaining permissions, insurance, carrying out risk assessment and the levels of facilities required for various scales of events. It also provides a model planning process for organising events from conception through to delivery and in this way offers a basis for greater community involvement in event planning and delivery.

#### **4.3 Key Issues - Resourcing**

A significant issue for events is funding – both to meet the direct costs of providing and promoting the performances but also for meeting the costs associated with events – including those falling on the City Services Directorate who have responsibility for a range of street cleansing and site management roles.

The City Council has committed itself over recent years to a significant events budget of £712,000 which is divided as follows:

- CVOne receives £540,000 from which they produce the Godiva Festival, Jazz Festival and other smaller events in the city centre
- The Belgrade Theatre receives £115,000
- the Diwali Festival of Light £22,000
- Caribbean Festival £5,000
- the remaining £30,000 is used by the Council's Events Office to facilitate a year-round programme throughout the city.

The majority of the budget therefore is committed year on year to the large projects and there is limited scope to expand the programme into new areas. Events such as *Made in Coventry*, held in February 2007 at the Ricoh, are very dependent on funding from regional bodies and sponsorship. There are often limited opportunities for generating income through events and the events programme therefore remains highly dependant on retaining the political support of the Council.

The smaller community events and festivals, which contribute so much to social cohesion across the city, are particularly vulnerable to a low funding base. They are largely organised by volunteers, and although many are undoubtedly highly skilled in both programming and fund-raising, there is considerable scope for supporting communities through grant programmes, training or capacity-building, or help in kind for publicity, marketing or equipment hire.

## **5. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**

### **5.1 The views of those consulted**

Interviews for this strategy demonstrated a general consensus that there is a good base for events to build on in Coventry and that there is potential to vary or expand the current programme which tends to be the same year on year. Overall, the majority of people spoken to are upbeat and keen to build capacity and provide a first rate service and to undertake new and exciting projects.

Views can be summarised as including:

- there is an abundance of local talent and tremendous potential to build capacity with the right resources
- there is a need to include City Services, eg some or all of Street Cleansing, Waste Services, Licensing, Traffic Management, Environmental Protection, Food Safety, Health and Safety and Emergency Planning in early planning of events
- experience shows that when planning is carried out at the beginning of the process it is possible to meet a wide range of objectives in an integrated way, problems occur when plans for events or facilities are well underway before advice and input is sought on issues such as Health and Safety
- Events need a proper 'recovery plan' to ensure adequate street and site cleansing and other vital activities once the event is over and to ensure public support for the event is not lessened
- there is a feeling that events could play an even greater role in boosting Coventry's profile
- the Council needs to identify a key figure to champion events
- the full benefits that could flow from events need to be promoted more fully to Elected Members and others in position of influence in the city
- certain figures in the events industry would rather that the department responsible for Culture, Leisure and Libraries had stayed in City Development and not moved to Community Services. They feel there would be more funding available
- despite the best efforts of the Council and CVOne, some of the smaller organisations which put on events still feel burdened by the rules and regulations.

### **5.2 SWOT analysis**

The results of consultation and research on events in Coventry are summarised in the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) table below. This provides a starting point for the Events Strategy itself in Section 6.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good basic mix of events in Coventry which can be built upon</li> <li>• some significant events with regional, national and international profile</li> <li>• varied events within the City Centre</li> <li>• excellent events people working in the industry in Coventry including the Council City Services and CVOne</li> <li>• Events Safety Group co-ordination of services</li> <li>• Events Safety Guide</li> <li>• plenty of local talent amongst the artistic community</li> <li>• Council events budget</li> <li>• large number of festivals and events organised by the community and voluntary sectors</li> <li>• inter-cultural and inter-faith events and celebrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dependence on Council funding, limited income and sponsorship</li> <li>• limited development funding for new events and limited innovation</li> <li>• level of local people stating they do not know of some events</li> <li>• impression that facilitators, organisers, producers, artists and communities are often working in isolation</li> <li>• some concerns on meeting legal and other requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• city looking for new direction and promotion</li> <li>• growth of city population, bring new audiences for events</li> <li>• improved city centre, offering high quality public spaces for events</li> <li>• creative industry development and links with two universities and education sector</li> <li>• 2012 Cultural Olympiad and Cathedral 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</li> <li>• major concerts at Ricoh, new centre for Midlands</li> <li>• investing in creative producers, including potential for development of carnival skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• event funding vulnerable, in competition with other Council priorities</li> <li>• Nimby-ism rather than understanding of benefits of events</li> <li>• lack of champion for events</li> <li>• failure to establish ambitious goals</li> <li>• limited innovation</li> <li>• few new events in the pipeline</li> <li>• inability to deliver facilities (including spaces) for creation and production for large-scale events</li> <li>• lack of co-ordination of information on events across the city</li> </ul>

## 6. The Events Strategy

### 6.1 Making the link with community priorities

The first task for the Events Strategy is to ensure that it builds on the opportunities that events offer in securing community benefit and economic and social benefits for the city as a whole. The Events Strategy needs to support the **Coventry City Council vision** for Coventry:

*"Coventry to be a growing accessible city where people choose to live, work and be educated and businesses choose to invest".<sup>1</sup>*

Clear messages about this vision arose at a visioning event held with the Coventry Partnership in January 2006 which focused on a vibrant and improved city centre, with pride in Coventry's image and heritage, safe and vibrant communities and a city at the heart of its sub-region. This is a vision that provides a strong and central place for events within Coventry.

The Events Strategy also needs to **support the inclusion agenda** and the targets for reducing inequalities across the city, particularly in the priority neighbourhoods. It needs to **support the Community Plan's strategic theme on Culture** and its priorities to:

- ensure that Coventry's cultural life including libraries, sport, physical activity, parks and open spaces, heritage and arts, enhance the needs of communities
- enrich individual lives, strengthen communities, improve places where people live, promote health and build the local economy through the city's cultural life.

Events can also make a **strong contribution to community cohesion**, offering opportunities to celebrate and promote the cultural expressions of Coventry's increasingly diverse communities and to meet the four objectives for community cohesion:

- to develop a sense of belonging and involvement
- appreciation and positive valuing of diversity
- ensuring similar life opportunities
- developing strong and positive relationships.

Events will also make a strong contribution in **other areas**:

- promoting the image of the city to visitors and to businesses that may be considering re-locating to the City
- animating the City Centre helping make it feel an enjoyable and safe place to be
- providing a showcase for local community organisations and promoting their work to a wider public.

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<sup>1</sup> Developing the City Council's Vision: Report to Cabinet, CCC December 2006



Events also provide the opportunity for **cross-departmental and cross-sectoral working**, bringing together the City Directorate Services who provide a foundation for events, CVOne who manage the city centre and provide major events and promotional services for the city, cultural providers like Imagineer and the Belgrade Theatre, the Cathedral and numerous community and special interest organisations.

In this sense a successful events programme is one of the most positive demonstrations of an effective cultural partnership for the city as a whole.

## 6.2 Linking with the Cultural Strategy – the contribution of Events

The Cultural Strategy has identified four priorities:

- A. Develop the new Creative Coventry**
- B. Raise Coventry's profile with the community and visitors**
- C. Connect the city's culture to the local neighbourhoods**
- D. Make the city centre a vibrant centre of culture**

It has identified twelve initiatives for delivering these priorities. The following table sets out an initial strategy for ensuring that Events play their full role in delivery of the Cultural Strategy.

<b>Cultural Strategy Initiative</b>	<b>Potential Events Contribution</b>
1. Plan with the Universities and other partners in the sub-region ways to facilitate and support the development of the cultural and creative industries	<p>Review effectiveness of ICE in supporting development of Imagineer as an events provider and identify the needs of events management and promotion as part of review of creative business needs</p> <p>Review with the two Universities the possibility of a major event promoting 'Creative Coventry' and role of creative and cultural business</p> <p>Identify ways in which links between cultural and creative businesses and the Universities can be exploited and showcased in existing and new major events</p>
2. Develop a programme to integrate Coventry schools and colleges with creative businesses and cultural organisations	Encourage inclusion in major local events including city centre events of presentations etc which result from school-based links with cultural sector organisations, including Creative Partnerships
3. Identify spaces which could be used to encourage the development of creative businesses and cultural organisations	<p>Include a review of the needs of events in the use of outdoor spaces and of events organisations requiring creation, production, storage and preparation spaces within the policy review by Property Spaces</p> <p>Promote events and involvement in events through use of empty shops and other display spaces in the city centre</p>

4. Develop and sustain a joint cultural marketing campaign for Coventry's growing cultural attractions	Identify the markets for various events and ensure their inclusion in the campaign  Maximise regional and national coverage for Coventry through major events
5. Enhance the special role for spectacular events in representing Coventry at its best	Review the feasibility of developing a world class event for the city at least biennially
6. Actively promote public art to enhance the quality of the city's environment and express the city's creativity	Promote launch events for new public art which offer opportunities for sponsorship and promotion of the city
7. Promote the city's role as a sub-regional centre for culture	Build on and extend if possible the Godiva Festival and sports awards to promote Coventry's cultural position
8. Develop a distinctive programme for the 2012 Cultural Olympiad in which Coventry can build on its status as a centre of Peace and Reconciliation	Work with CVOne and the Cathedral to review how 2012 could be used as a focus for Coventry as a vital cultural centre and as a centre for Peace and Reconciliation
9. Identify initiatives and resources that can promote cultural opportunities for the whole community and increase cultural participation	Promote local involvement in all events and monitor the results, particularly the extent to which communities from priority neighbourhoods are represented in participation in events  Assess capacity in community organisations to support and sustain community events, and develop training and grant in aid to improve their abilities to stage activities
10. Develop the evening economy in the city centre making it a busier and more vibrant place	Include the potential for evening events and animation within the action planning for the evening economy
11. Develop and promote Coventry as an accessible city	Ensure fully inclusive participation in and enjoyment of events for all Coventry communities, including disabled and deaf people, BME communities, gay and lesbian people, families and individuals suffering economic hardship: monitor attendance and take-up rates for events
12. Develop an online Web Portal for Culture, which can be linked to the Council's Coventry Active database	Ensure full links with city-wide and neighbourhood events on the portal.

### 6.3 Ensuring implementation of the Events Strategy

It will be expected that further development of the Cultural Strategy Action Plan will include consideration of this strategy and that partners identified within the Cultural Strategy Action Plan will draw on these possibilities. It will be essential to involve Events organisers and Council departments involved in events organisation and there should be close liaison with the City Services Directorate and the Events Safety Group in the development of initiatives involving events.

## Appendix B

### Case Studies

*This short collection of case studies illustrates some of the wide range of cultural activities in Coventry and the benefits participation can bring to individuals and communities.*

#### **Kombat Breakers and Frontline AV**

The young dance group (aged from 13 to 25), Kombat Breakers, has worked with Frontline AV over the past five years in dance workshops, performances, break dance battles, new theatre pieces and film and television productions. Their unique blend of break dance with street dance and entertainment has developed to make them a popular fixture in Coventry's cultural landscape.

And their profile is certainly growing – from 'Jump Coventry' in 2005 through to this summer's finals in ITV1's 'Britain's Got Talent' show.

***'Jump Coventry' was devised, shot and produced by Frontline AV, featuring the Kombat Breakers mixing breaking and free running skills across key landmark buildings and cityscapes in Coventry. The film was used to open the International Children's Games hosted in Coventry 2005, and has featured frequently since to promote Coventry and sports activities for young people.***

After the success of *Britain's Got Talent*, other members of the Kombats have moved on to feature in the 'Dance X' show on the BBC and programmes such as 'Lazy Town'. But this mix of school kids and youth workers want to move on from dancing as a hobby into a career, so they can tour and teach other young people.

All this has helped to stimulate a massive amount of interest and enthusiasm for urban dance across Coventry – so watch out when you're next in town – it's breaking out all over!

#### **Photo credits:**

Frontline AV



## Belgrade Theatre: *'Hussan and Harry'*

*'Hussan and Harry'* was a joint venture between the Belgrade Senior Youth Theatre, Yuva (a group of young refugees supported by the City Council) and Talking Birds.

The work started with interviews with some of Coventry's elderly residents about their World War II experiences. This was matched by discussions with a number of young asylum-seekers, and drew out feelings and responses which mirrored those of the elders. The resulting play, combining improvisation and reminiscence, used young performers from refugee communities in Coventry, working alongside adult actors.

The story contrasted the experience of a young Coventrian (Harry), traumatised by the bombing of the city, with the problems faced by teenage refugees housed next to him, as an old man. The play explored similarities in the past of both Harry and Hussan, and showed how these could help both to deal with the wounds of the present.

The play's brief run met with great acclaim from its audiences: *'fantastic production'*; *'thought-provoking material'*; *'gripping'*; *'refreshing, deeply sincere and moving'*, and drew packed houses not only from Coventry but as far afield as Hull and Staffordshire. There are plans for a revival in 2008.

### **Photo credits:**

Janet Vaughan, Talking Birds





## Positive Futures

Positive Futures is a national sports-based project based in the most deprived areas of the country. The Coventry project is managed by the City Council's Sport and Physical Activity Development Team and focuses on young people from Hillfields and Foleshill.

Since it began in 2002, the project has been one of the most successful in the UK. As a result of Positive Futures:

- 8 young people are active as Positive Future volunteers or paid members of staff, all coming through the projects as participants
- over 150 young people take part in lunchtime, classroom-based and community sessions during the week
- a total of over 370 young people enrolled in some form of regular Positive Futures activity last year
- more than 20 young people who attended the education-based sessions or lunchtime referrals completed their GCSEs in 2006 and have gone on to Further Education.

One of the first to progress through the programme was Abdal Razak, who has been involved in the project since the very start. From being a participant, he has quickly developed to being a key member of staff, employed as a full-time Youth Mentor.

Abdal is very clear on what being part of Positive Futures has meant to him personally. From being someone who used to get bullied a lot at school and who tried to find any excuse not to attend, he picked up football skills through Positive Futures, which helped boost his confidence. Abdal's self-esteem was helped by working with his project mentor, Rashid Bhayat, who convinced him of the importance of school and encouraged him to achieve more.

Previously a reluctant student, who was only thought capable of getting two GCSE passes, Abdal in fact gained eight and four A-levels, also securing a place at university. He left university to take up a full-time post with Positive Futures and is very keen to progress his own career in sports-related community programmes. As he says: *'I'll always be in debt to Positive Futures in every way and I want to do what I can to give back to the community and help others out of their difficulties'*.

### **Photo credits:**

Coventry City Council







## **Coventry Blaze: RaW Hits Ice**

The city's ice hockey team, Coventry Blaze, are not just content with excelling on the ice – they've been working hard to promote literacy skills in the community. As part of the BBC's national RaW (Reading and Writing) campaign, Blaze Creative Writing sessions have been taking place at the Central Library throughout the 2006 – 2007 season. A Blaze player has been going along to each session to help encourage those who want to improve their writing skills.

And they also ran creative writing competitions on their website, including the winning limerick from Blaze fan, Balnek Sangra:

*'The Coventry Blaze inspire  
With amazing skills I admire  
It's ironically nice  
That for a team on ice  
The Coventry Blaze are on fire!'*

## Festival of Motoring

Coventry has a long tradition of high profile motoring events, from the spectacular World Motoring Centenary in 1986 to the more recent Shakespeare, Godiva and Coventry Car Runs. The Coventry Festival of Motoring is a key event in the city's calendar and a must for anyone interested in veteran, vintage or classic cars.

It's organised by the Coventry Transport Museum, with support from the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust, Peugeot, CVOne and the City Council. Last year's event attracted over 500 entrants from across the UK, with a display of almost 100 vehicles in Millennium Place. This was followed the next day by a cavalcade of more than 500 cars touring around Coventry and North Warwickshire. The Festival regularly attracts thousands of spectators and Malcolm Oliver of the Transport Museum commented *'the Festival has become an important annual event and already we have a long list of car owners eager to take part again next year'*.

### Photo credits:

Coventry Transport Museum



## **Positive Images Multicultural Festival and Refugee Week**

First held in 1995, the Positive Images Festival has grown from a one day event to a three week festival of the arts, alongside learning and information events and activities. The Festival really brings communities together, and celebrates the culture, traditions, heritage and artistic skills of all Coventry's communities. One of the Festival's main aims is to break down negative images of ethnic minorities, refugees and asylum-seekers and make them feel a part of the city and its life.

Positive Images is organised by a large number of the city's ethnic minority and community groups, and takes place from mid-June to early July across Coventry, from the city centre to the neighbourhoods.

In 2007 you could choose from over 75 events (virtually all free) such as:

- Community fair with stalls on art and community activities with competitions and quizzes
- Punjabi poetry workshop and performance
- Chinese cultural festival with dragon dancing, martial arts and calligraphy
- Open air dance and music event in the Cathedral ruins (with performers from Indian, Irish, Ukrainian, Pakistani and African communities)
- Malaysian films at Warwick Arts Centre or African films at the Herbert
- An intercultural football tournament
- A bilingual tour of Foleshill Library
- Performance by the Notables, a learning disabled group of singers from Coventry
- A healthy fun day, including a didgeridoo workshop
- Rhymes and stories from around the world for under-fives.

### **Photo credits:**

Positive Images brochure

## International Children's Games

In July 2005 Coventry had the honour of being the first UK city to host the International Children's Games. Much of the competition took place at the University of Warwick and the Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, with an Athletes Village in the university student accommodation.

Young athletes between the ages of 12 – 15, from over 50 countries, took part in one of the highlights of the global sporting calendar. Teams represent cities from participating countries, and Coventry as host city fielded its own group of young people.

But it wasn't just about sports – the opening ceremony gave a high profile opportunity to show off the artistic and creative talents of Coventry's youngsters, too. The ceremony was the culmination of months of hard work by the former Belgrade Theatre Events Team (now Imagineer Productions) who worked with young people to devise a spectacular show of the best of Coventry past and present.

The city had never created and produced such an ambitious event before. It involved over 1,000 artists and performers in front of an audience of 7,000 VIPs, local people and visitors to the city. The following day saw the show turned into a carnival procession through Coventry and was seen by 40,000 people. Councillor John Mutton, Chairman of the International Children's Games Organising Committee said: *'We could not have asked for a better start to the Games. The production was truly spectacular'*.

**Photo credits:**

BBC; Tony Swann

## Appendix C

### Overview of Cultural Participation

#### 1. Coventry's Participation in Culture

Coventry's latest Household Survey for 2005-2006 provides an insight into how much Coventry people get involved in cultural activities and what they think of the provision in their city. For example:

- 50% participate in active sports at least 12 times a year, whilst about 30% attend arts events and 35% participate in arts events at least twice a year
- 46% make at least one visit each year to a museum and only a slightly lower proportion visit an art gallery or a historic site.

There are still disparities, however, across the city particularly with Coventry's priority neighbourhoods where lower cultural participation is sometimes evident. For example:

- Participation in sports activities, in accessing museums and galleries is about 5% less in priority neighbourhoods, although there is now a much reduced gap for participation in or attendance at arts activities
- Black and minority ethnic communities participate in active sports less but attend Museums more often than the city as a whole
- Black and minority ethnic communities are far less likely to *attend* arts events although their active participation in arts events is high.

How does Coventry's participation measure up against the National Baseline figures set by government? For example:

- Participation in sports activities is lower than the baseline except for Coventry's priority neighbourhoods which although participating less than the city as a whole do better than many similar areas in the UK
- However, for all groups except disabled people participation in arts activity in Coventry is well above the National Baseline figures
- Access to museums and galleries is above the National Baseline except for disabled people
- For all groups visits to historic environmental sites is well below the National Baseline.

Whilst it is not possible to provide a complete picture of the numbers of participants and visitors to all of Coventry's cultural facilities and activities, in person visit figures for some of the main facilities and activities for the year 2006/7 are summarised in the following table:

<b>Service</b>	<b>User figures 2006/7</b>
Libraries	2,055,770
Coventry and Foleshill Sports centres and Brandon Wood Golf course	988,866
Midland Sports Centre and Centre AT7 (sport)	733,522
The Herbert, Lunt Fort and Priory Visitor Centre*	100,320
Schools programme at the Lunt, The Herbert and Priory**	16,225
Transport Museum	286,672
Events	150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,331,375</b>

\* figure is low because of closure of The Herbert for redevelopment

\*\* figure adjusted from Council figures to reflect figure included in 2.2 below for The Herbert's education programme.

## **2. How Satisfied are Coventry's People with Cultural Provision?**

How satisfied are Coventry people with their cultural provision? Again, the Household Survey provides some insights.

- Over 70% are satisfied with Libraries although this is slightly below the average for metropolitan areas like Coventry
- 62% are satisfied with Parks and Open Spaces but this is well below other metropolitan areas
- 50% are satisfied with Sport and Leisure provision which is 5% below the metropolitan average
- 54% are satisfied with Museums and Galleries which is above the metropolitan mean although lower than the best performing places
- Only 36% are satisfied with Theatres and Concerts but this figure was 50% in the previous year – the drop almost certainly reflecting the temporary closure of the Belgrade Theatre for redevelopment and this earlier and higher figure is about the average for metropolitan areas.

There has also been real progress in creating greater access to cultural services. For example:

- Bookstart – meeting the needs of the younger population has achieved 67.2% take up for 18-month olds (national benchmark 26%) and 100% for 3-year olds (national benchmark 40%)
- Participation in education programmes at The Herbert - rise from 7,449 in 2003/4 to 16,225 in 2006/7

- Attendance at arts events by disabled people has risen from 13.2% in 2005 to 19.5% in 2006
- Access to art galleries by people from BME communities at least twice a year has risen from 11.8% in 2005 to 14.8% in 2006
- Participation by people from BME communities in moderate physical activity at least three times a week has risen from 22.4% in 2005 to 41.5% in 2006.

### 3. Quality of Life in Priority Neighbourhoods and the Rest of the City

The concept of quality of life, and the differences in quality of life between sections of the community, are central concerns for the Cultural Strategy. The Coventry Partnership's analysis of previous Household Surveys, *Quality of Life in Coventry: Household Survey 2003-6* (October 2006), provides some important insights into the elements of quality of life, although these may be revised once the full results of the latest Household Survey are analysed. For example:

- The survey up to 2005 shows some general improvements in quality of life indicators for Coventry's priority neighbourhoods including 'satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live' and 'feeling safe in the neighbourhood'
- Of great significance for Coventry's self image as a place of relative harmony among ethnic groups is the rising number of people who feel that 'people from differing backgrounds get on well together' and that 'residents respect differences between people'
- But residents in the priority neighbourhoods are less hopeful about 'the future for themselves and their households' and fewer are 'actively involved in neighbourhood issues or interested in getting involved'
- In addition young people and those from ethnic minorities are less likely to be actively involved or to feel involved in decisions about their areas.

The survey also asks respondents what they would most like to see improved in their neighbourhoods and whilst 'Cleanliness of streets' and 'Level of crime' are ranked 1 and 2, several of the top ten factors are particularly relevant for cultural development - particularly in relation to young people:

Factor	Rank
Activities for teenagers	3
Facilities for young people	5
Parks and open spaces	6
Access to green space	9

### 4. The City Centre and Culture

How do Coventrians view their city centre and do they see it as a place for leisure and culture? CVOne's *Annual Survey 2006*, based on both street and telephone interviews, provides some information that can help answer these questions.

Only 16% of those visiting the city centre were from outside the CV1 to 6 postcode areas illustrating the relatively local usage of the city centre with 'proximity to home' being a major reason for choosing Coventry.

Of these users of the city centre:

- 17% were visiting for work or business
- 24% were food shopping
- 32% were comparison (non-food) shopping

However, 50% of those reporting another reason for visiting the city centre stated they would also be shopping. Only 2% reported they were visiting for sight-seeing reasons and some of these were also visiting because of shopping.

14% of respondents felt unsafe in the daytime but this rose to 44% in the evening (with the figures being higher for those who visited infrequently). Only 25% of respondents rated the City Centre as good or excellent

Despite the unsurprising emphasis on shopping as the main reason for visiting the city centre, 61% of those surveyed stated they also visited for other reasons including:

- 40% for eating and drinking out
- 35% to access services
- 20% for nightclubs

A similar proportion (59%) stated they visited in the evenings but this was mostly younger people for pubs, cinemas, restaurants and nightclubs. 30% said they visited in the evening at least once a month but a high proportion (41%) said that they never visited the city centre in the evening. The main reasons for not visiting during the evening were safety concerns (27%) and lack of interest (26%).

Asked what they would change about the city centre many wanted better quality and more choice of shops (34 and 23%) and cheaper car parking (25%) whilst 19% said it needed to be more attractive.

Despite the unsurprising focus on shopping for daytime visits to the city centre, 46% of respondents reported attending at least one CVOne event with the Godiva Festival and the French Market proving particularly popular and the Autumn Lifestyle Events attracting 35% of respondents under 8 years of age. However, a surprising 36% of respondents had not attended events because they were not aware of them.

The survey carried out a gap analysis about people's perceptions of and levels of satisfaction about the city centre. Whilst no areas of provision scored as 'very satisfactory' those areas classed as satisfactory (that is there is a small gap between perception of importance and levels of satisfaction) included:

- Cafes, pubs and restaurants
- The environments
- Free events and entertainments
- Choice of services.

Whilst those areas classed as OK included:

- Provision of leisure facilities



- Personal safety.

Looking at the changing perceptions over time it is significant that whilst free events and entertainment are classed as satisfactory, this is accompanied by a year on year growth in how important they are seen in increasing the city centre's attractiveness – with a more than equivalent increase in satisfaction with events and entertainment.

## 5. The Views of Young People – Coventry as a Space of Possibilities

Few surveys manage to capture the views of young people on their city and its cultural provision. Coventry's Cultural Strategy can benefit from the Space of Possibilities project set up by the Creative Partnerships programme and jointly organised with Imagineer, Talking Birds and Common Purpose. This consultation project used thirteen artists working with thirteen schools across Coventry, to explore what children between the ages of five and fifteen think their city should be like.

The vision which emerged is extraordinary – powerful, playful and with an amazing understanding of what makes a city worth living in. The young people involved have suggested ten possibilities for a newly reinvigorated city – with culture as the driving force:

- *It is the greenest city in the UK:* taking responsibility for the environment and helping to 'heal' the planet
- *No one is lonely:* everyone is included and how 'Bob' can help – an individual who'll organise events, start up clubs, be a hero...
- *All journeys are thrilling:* understanding that the journey itself across the city can be transformative, leading to happy, accidental discoveries
- *The city makes us laugh:* finding a place for wit and humour, creating mazes and frivolous events
- *Spectacular yet full of accidental beauty:* bold buildings, enjoyment of the skyline, taking time to appreciate what is all around us
- *Views up high and down low:* more observation galleries to look down over the city and feel on top of the world and better things to see from the ground up – colour and texture
- *The city eases family stress:* free places to go as a family (a beach, perhaps?), ways to introduce the city intimately to its own residents – guides
- *The city is a safe risk:* places where children of all ages feel safe and where they belong, spaces to have adventurous play
- *It gives us pride to say we live here:* children want to know more about their city, its heritage and identity – a confident place breeds confident people
- *Everything is celebrated:* the city needs to harness excitement about itself and be much more lively – have the busiest social calendar of events on every scale of any city in the UK.

## 6. Participation In Sport and Active Recreation Among Young People

Communities that Care (CtC) is a long term preventative programme. It identifies key risk and protective factors for any given community of children and young people and then introduces a range of effective interventions. These seek to reduce the

risks of problem behaviours, including youth crime, drug abuse, school age pregnancy and school failure.

In 2004, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (C&YPSP) commissioned Communities that Care to undertake a survey of all secondary age young people in Coventry. Around 11,000 pupils were surveyed between September 2004 and March 2005 producing a sample of 9,929 valid responses from 15 out of 18 secondary schools.

### **Pro-social Involvement**

Communities that Care recognises pro-social involvement in school as a key protective factor. Protective factors that – in potentially adverse circumstances – can help to buffer children against risk and successfully navigate their way towards adulthood.

Communities that Care that children and young people need opportunities to feel involved in their families, schools and communities – to make a real contribution and feel valued for it.

The survey asked two activity related questions:

**In the following questions please tick one of the following options**

**'YES yes no NO'**

**C1.**

- a. In my school, pupils have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules
- b. There are lots of chances for me to talk to a teacher one-to-one
- c. I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities
- d. There are lots of chances for pupils in my school to get involved in sports, clubs and other activities in break-time and after school**
- e. My teachers notice when I am doing something well and let me know

**J3. In the last four weeks, have you been to.....**

- a. ....a Scouts or Guides group, Boys or Girls Brigade or cadet group?
- b. ....another group or club (e.g. youth club) where you can meet people your age and take part in activities such as playing pool, sport, music, art or drama?
- c. ....a leisure or sports centre (outside school hours)?**
- d. ....a religious service?

### **Chances to get involved in sports/clubs**

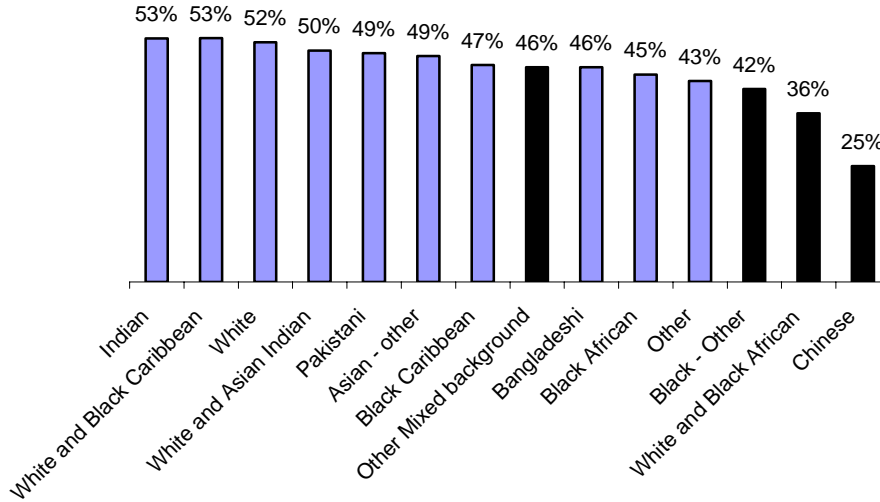
9 in 10 (89%) of children & young people indicated that there were lots of chances to get involved in sports/clubs in break and after school.

Girls (91%) were significantly more likely than boys (87%) to say there were opportunities to get involved in sports/clubs. Also Year 7/8 pupils were significantly more likely that Year 9-11 pupils to say there were opportunities to get involved in sports/clubs.

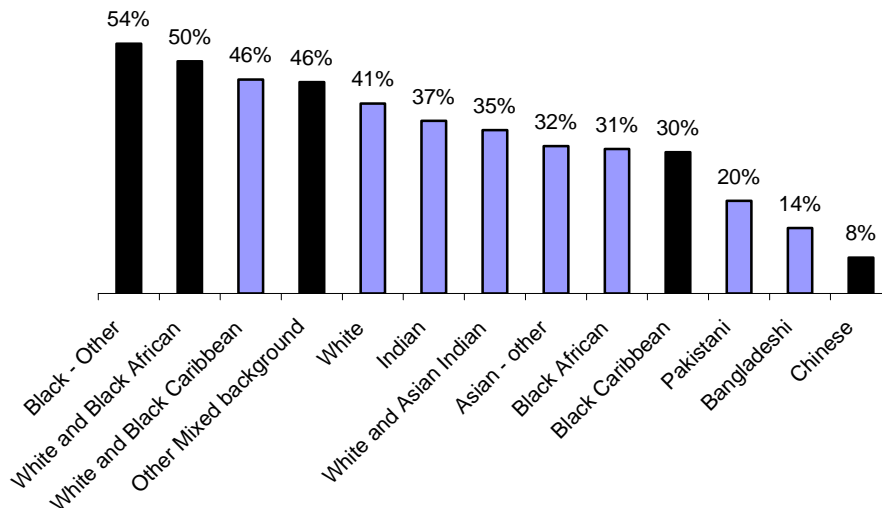
In terms of ethnicity, boys from the Indian (53%) and White & Black Caribbean (53%) and White (52%) community were most likely to have been to a leisure centre. The least likely were Pakistani (20%) and Bangladeshi girls (14%). This may be for cultural reasons.

**Boys – who have been to a leisure centre in the last four weeks (CtC 2005)**

(please note - the lines in black indicate a low base rate less than 50 – so these are indicative figures)



**Girls– who have been to a leisure centre in the last four weeks (CtC 2005)**



## Focus Group results

A focus group was undertaken with the Connexions reference group in July 2007. This included 15 young people aged between 13 and 23 from Coventry and the surrounding area. The young people were asked to comment on the findings of the Communities that Care survey including participation in sport, under 'Enjoy and Achieve'

### Summary Feedback

<p><b>ENJOY AND ACHIEVE</b></p> <p>- Sport</p>	<p><b>Types of sport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for increased variety of sports (rounders not just for girls, swimming available in secondary school)</li> </ul> <p><b>Motivation – why/why not</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More boys doing sport than girls</li> <li>• Girls doing sport because they want to lose weight</li> <li>• Asian girls not getting involved in sport because of cultural issues around short skirts</li> </ul> <p><b>How to encourage sport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a wider range</li> <li>• More facilities outside of school</li> <li>• More input from young people about what they want</li> <li>• Not just concentrating on those who are doing GCSE sports</li> <li>• Not just concentrating on Football</li> <li>• More programmes all year round (not just summer when young people are on holiday)</li> </ul>
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### Verbatims

#### Choice

Male 'I enjoyed rounders'

Male ' They shouldn't do that because I actually enjoyed rounders at primary school and then at secondary school you couldn't do it, cos it was only a girls sport, and boys had to play football'

#### So there were other activities that you thought should be offered?

Female 'It's like when you're younger you get to do a lot of swimming and stuff when you are younger ...

Female 'My mum volunteers at a school and they go swimming like once or twice a week ... and once you get to secondary school you don't get that opportunity, so things like that get taken away from you...

Male 'You don't get as many opportunities as you used to at school ... it kinda gets taken off you when you get to secondary

**Boys or Girls doing more sport?**

Female 'I would say more boys'

Male 'I think more boys are doing it but it's kinda evened out'

Male 'a lot of girls are into it – a lot of girls are into P.E at the moment'

Female 'I think you will find – with girls its more because of like the weight issue ... its like 'I'm fat I wanna lose weight I wanna do exercise' ... also because of that reason a lot of girls won't want to do P.E ... they got told you had to wear skirts when you do P.E ... a lot of girls refuse to wear them - they said we'll do P.E but not wear those clothes – once that happened they wanted to do it more – as opposed to the uniform they were told they had to wear'

**Why are you least likely to get involved in sport if you are from the Asian population?**

Female 'Is that because of uniform ... I don't know ... I mean because I know like with some religions sometimes you have to cover up a lot ... so if you're told that at school you have to wear short skirts you might not feel comfortable with doing that ... its not something that you would usually wear if you are not in a school environment – I don't know

Male 'At my school its mostly Asians now who (were told they had to) wear skirts (in P.E) – not a single girl would wear it 'and most of the parents would get pretty angry

Male 'But it's the law now isn't it ... you can't make people stop now – you have to make it (what's the word I'm looking for) ... 'be flexible'

Male 'Compromise'

Female 'Yeh that's the word'

**How would you encourage more young people to get involved in sport?**

Male 'Have a wider range'

Male 'Have more facilities outside of school'

Female 'More input – ask them what do you want at the end of the day'

Male – 'You only get an hour a week if you don't do it'

Male – Most of my friends play football - I love it – but still...

## **How about stuff outside of school?**

### **Skating?**

Male – It's like the only places to do are on the outskirts of the city or in the middle of the city – like Longford Park, the skate park, the Memorial Park – I don't know if there are any others – one at Bedworth I think

Male – Its has to be – you have to have a green area – within a mile of your house'

Female 'I find that they always try to run programmes in the summer in the leisure centre if you want to – if you want to do athletics, do you want to do something else, they want you to pay, and a lot of students won't have the money to pay for these courses, depending on how much money they are likely to be, but in the summer a lot of people go on holiday with their family, but there's nothing throughout the rest of the academic year to encourage you to do these courses – its like you do it in the summer but once it's the rest of the year there's nothing else for you to do – instead of being all year round so they have a good turnover'

## **Appendix D**

### **Summary of Views from Consultation**

#### **1. Consulting Coventry**

What are the views of those with a stake in the future of Coventry including people and organisations within the cultural sector itself? How do they view the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural sector, the issues and constraints that affect it and the opportunities that, with vision and energy, are within its grasp?

A large number of people and organisations have been consulted both as individuals and as groups in developing the Cultural Strategy. This appendix brings together the views of those consulted to provide a picture of Coventry and its culture, summarised through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Strengths).

#### **2. Culture in Coventry – the views of those consulted**

Whilst it goes without saying that there is no absolute unanimity about the position of culture and the quality of cultural provision in Coventry, it is not surprising that common themes emerged through much of the consultation process – based on the shared experience of living in the City and reflected in many of its current policies, strategies and initiatives.

The common views that emerged through consultation are grouped below to provide an overview of the present position of culture in Coventry. The focus is on the ‘big issues’ rather than the ‘big players’. Coventry’s cultural sector, like the city as a whole, is on the move. But in many cases this is taking place on a piecemeal basis, without an overview or strategic plan. One view that was frequently and consistently expressed was the need for a Cultural Strategy to bring together and provide a focus for stakeholders in the city’s future, seizing upon its many cultural opportunities.

##### **2.1 Coventry’s profile and attitudes to culture**

A number of issues facing the city are perceived to stem from how it sees itself, and how it views the relative success of other places. Many interviewees agreed that Coventry feels as if it is stuck with an industrial, manufacturing image – and that other cities have moved ahead.

Coventry’s location between actual or perceived cultural ‘big hitters’ – Birmingham, Stratford, Leicester and Nottingham – strengthen this sense of inferiority, and this is thought to be symbolised in a city centre that lacks buzz.

Despite a definite economic renaissance since the decline of the industrial base and the ongoing visible symbols of city centre renewal from the Millennium onwards, there is not yet a critical mass of public pride. Coventrians are still reluctant to sell themselves and their city – amongst themselves, as well as to the outside world.

Many in the cultural sector feel that culture in the city is widely perceived in a negative or limited way and there is a strong perception that local audiences are not familiar or

comfortable with the new or innovative. For some of those consulted a key role for the Cultural Strategy is to 'raise the bar' of ambition for culture and to challenge Coventry and its communities to embrace excitement and change.

There was concern that the Cathedral has not fully responded to the opportunities to play an iconic role for Coventry as a world centre for Peace and Reconciliation, and that the multi-faith role it wishes to play is not sufficiently acknowledged or supported within the City.

Yet there was almost unanimous praise for Coventry as a relatively harmonious place, which had welcomed incomers throughout its history and maintained a positive attitude towards an increasingly diverse community – and which had begun to grasp the opportunity of celebrating that diversity as a vital aspect of its local culture.

## **2.2 Coventry's cultural infrastructure**

Despite this 'image' problem, those consulted saw the growing network of cultural facilities and activities within Coventry as a definite strength. The 'great leaps of faith' which established the Belgrade Theatre, the Transport Museum, The Herbert, the Coventry Sports Centre and the rebuilt Cathedral in earlier periods have been matched with later developments like Warwick Arts Centre, Coombe Country Park, The Ricoh Stadium, Skydome, the improved Transport Museum and the current major redevelopments of the Belgrade and The Herbert.

Whilst the large institutions represent a considerable asset for the City, there is also strength in community-based facilities, the local libraries, an informal network of pubs and clubs supporting live music, local sports clubs and facilities and small theatres such as the Criterion and Wheatsheaf players.

But there are weaknesses in this facility infrastructure: the Coventry Sports Centre is in need of renewal, the Cathedral and much of the heritage of the City is playing too limited a role in the lives of local people as well as visitors and there are still some doubts that University-based facilities and activities are truly accessible to the non-student population. The connection between different providers of sport and physical activity was also seen as a draw-back to collective development in addition to the need to use sport as a tool to engage and develop individuals within many of the more deprived areas of the City.

Those active in cultural sectors pointed to gaps in provision in creation, rehearsal and production spaces, contemporary exhibition facilities for artists and craftspeople, and affordable, flexible spaces for local heritage groups. There are also facility weaknesses in some neighbourhoods, with limited community and sports provision all of which limit access to cultural opportunities for many residents. Facility planning has in the past been based on targeting opportunities for funding rather than supporting an agreed overall strategy.

The two Sports Colleges in the City appear to have little connection with the broader voluntary sports community and the development of joint volunteer and club-school link programmes is an opportunity to develop the sporting infrastructure to the benefit of young people and existing community sport.



There is, however, a growing focus on the importance of creative and cultural business and on training. The two Universities are taking a leading role in this, with the ICE project at Coventry University constituting an important development in building a source of excellence which can take Coventry's established leading role in design and related skills into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **2.3 People, organisations and activities**

The cultural infrastructure, of course, extends well beyond its buildings – interviewees pointed to the strengths of the programme of events within the City and its growing range of organisations and networks supporting cultural development.

Two major events, the Godiva Festival and the Jazz Festival, are placing Coventry on the map, alongside the well established Mystery Plays and one-off celebrations such as MAD UK and Made in Coventry, and local community festivals including Hillfields and Willenhall. The provision of community based sports events such as hosting the Race for Life has placed Coventry as the centre of the county in addition to the high quality activities provided through the Coventry Sports Foundation.

There is a strong tradition of 'urban culture' in Coventry, reflected in music, MCing, and graffiti art with rising young stars Kombat Breakers and media projects like Hillz Radio reflecting the creative energy of young people. New theatre groups have emerged, an innovative events organisation, Imagineer, has established itself and programmed a community opening of the Ricoh Stadium.

Those consulted pointed to a growing and widening support network for developing access to culture. For example, the Creative Partnerships programme is linking Coventry schools with creative and cultural organisations, businesses and individuals, BBC Coventry and Warwickshire promotes local heritage and other cultural activities, voluntary sector groups representing Coventry's diverse communities (such as the Muslim Resource Centre or Minorities in Europe UK) support a range of cultural activities. The Coventry Performing Arts Service provides activities, resources and advice to the City's schools and communities.

The opportunities for the development of clear and distinct links between the education sector at school, college and university levels and voluntary sports clubs was seen as an untapped opportunity, even more so in the development of local people as volunteers within their own communities. In addition the support that the universities can provide an opportunities for the development of high level skills and experiences in the sports sector

Outreach work was seen as a strength (within the limits of funding): the Library Service supports story-telling and art workshops in local libraries and other venues and many cited the quality and range of outreach work undertaken by the Belgrade Theatre, Warwick Arts Centre, Arts Exchange and The Herbert amongst others.

As well as the development of facility provision, a strong view was put forward for the need to address the aspect of people development both in terms of the recruitment, retention and recognition of volunteers as well as development of the skills and experiences to empower local people to develop sporting activities within their communities. A particular example was the lost opportunity through the appointment of Community Sport Coaches.

## **2.4 Coventry City Centre**

The role of the City Centre emerged as a contentious issue with many of those interviewed. There was, nonetheless, widespread recognition of the value of CVOne as a single co-ordinator of city centre services, praise for events and street activities organised by them and appreciation of physical improvements to the public realm and the retail centres.

However, for many the City Centre is seen as a serious weakness, particularly in the evening when perceived dangers, the preponderance of young and alcohol-fuelled groups and a lack of restaurants and cafes are felt to be off-putting to many. To this should be added the impact of the ring road as a barrier to movement and limited bus services.

The City Centre is also seen as weak in terms of attracting visitors with limited or inadequate marketing of its cultural attractions and its heritage beyond the Cathedral. Some pointed to difficulties of signage and navigating around Coventry's distinctive pattern of routes and public spaces.

Some of those consulted raised the role of Coventry as a sub-regional centre, for example with its role in community-based sports events seen as taking a positive approach without trying to compete with the regional and national provision of sporting and music events provided by Birmingham and the NEC.

A constant theme was the development of community-based activities which networked with the City Centre and the city could play a role of bringing together and celebrating locally based sporting and other activity.

A constant theme in consultation is the complaint that people do not know about the range of cultural activities and opportunities in the City Centre and beyond. Some point to the lack of joint marketing by cultural bodies, although this is now being partially addressed by the Council and the Cultural Partnership.

Yet despite the current issues, many are optimistic and see the improving City Centre as contributing to the successful growth of the city as a whole with its cultural offer playing an indispensable role in attracting and retaining businesses, visitors and local people.

## **2.5 Partnership and Leadership**

There is a general recognition of a lack of strategic leadership and direction for cultural development in the past – notwithstanding the many successes of the ad hoc and even opportunistic approach which has underpinned the substantial development to date.

Many of those consulted recognise that culture still needs to make and win the argument for the key role it should play in the City's future and that strong leadership for culture, within the City Council and elsewhere, is yet to emerge. The establishment of the Cultural Partnership as part of the Coventry Partnership is greatly welcomed, but it does not yet fully represent the whole cultural sector, with libraries, sport and the private sector notable areas of weakness.

Whilst individual partnerships have emerged, there remain serious weaknesses, for example, in working linkages between the Council and the two Universities, and in joint marketing between the main cultural institutions. And sub-regional links between Coventry and its surrounding hinterland are limited.

The lack of coherent leadership or planning is becoming a more serious problem with the further growth and development of the City – which will demand a commensurate expansion of cultural provision. Some of those interviewed point to the lack of follow-through or capitalising on events like the International Children’s Games or the Ricoh launch as examples of this.

## 2.6 Resources

The financing of culture is, unsurprisingly, seen by many of those interviewed as a major issue. The overwhelmingly crucial role of Council funding is recognised, particularly in core funding of the key sports, leisure, green space, heritage and arts facilities. There is, however, limited funding available for development of new projects, of outreach work or for innovation – whether by the existing ‘flagships’ of culture or newly emerging organisations.

Some of those interviewed complain that the management of funding linked to regeneration initiatives tends to be excessively bureaucratic and inflexible, preventing small-scale and emerging community projects obtaining the funding they need. And apart from Coventry University’s ICE project and the Arts and Media Training programme, there are limited development opportunities for creativity and creative businesses.

Resourcing is also an issue for the major events such as the Godiva Festival, for street activities and for local neighbourhood activities where there are few or no opportunities to levy entry or participation charges. There is limited sponsorship throughout the sector, perhaps reflecting the decline of Coventry’s industry (and its limited role in the city’s cultural provision). The small scale of the visitor economy, except for major festivals and for free visits such as to the Transport Museum, also limits the funding available to the cultural sector as a whole.

## 2.7 The Opportunities

Many of those consulted drew attention to multiple opportunities for culture in Coventry’s future development and in establishing it as a place where everyone has the potential to enjoy a good quality of life.

Underpinning many of these opportunities, and the optimism about Coventry’s future felt by many of those consulted, is the **planned growth of the city**. Alongside a growing population, the current regeneration programme envisages a more diverse city centre with a greater number of businesses, offices and residences located within the ring road or near to it. The arrival of IKEA’s first city centre store will herald an improved retail offer and the station area development will provide a new gateway to the city centre.

This **diversification of the city centre economy** will accompany the completion of the redevelopment of the Belgrade Theatre, itself part of a new Plaza development, and The Herbert. Many see the opportunity for the city’s cultural sector to play a key role in

providing the 'buzz' the city centre currently lacks, raising its profile within the region and beyond, and attracting a diverse social and ethnic mix of people to an improved evening economy. Some see an opportunity for representing the quality and distinctiveness of city centre improvements with an **iconic structure or installation** which will make a strong statement about Coventry's future.

A second significant platform for culture in the city's growth and development is seen in the **development of cultural and creative businesses**. At national and regional level knowledge-based businesses exhibit growth rates above the average (DCMS stats to be added) and are widely seen as an important element for UK prosperity in a globalised economy. Coventry's real strengths in design and innovation are seen as one pillar for an expanded focus on facilitating individuals and businesses in this sector. Building **links between the two universities, schools and colleges to develop creativity and creative business** can help retain the graduates which the City often loses.

The opportunities, however, are not just about the economy and business. Many point to Coventry's status as a **world centre of peace and reconciliation** and to its relative **social and ethnic harmony**. These are a matter of pride but not to be taken for granted. The Cathedral, an iconic focus for this element of Coventry's cultural profile, has ambitious plans for a centre of peace and reconciliation and these could be linked to a distinctive Coventry contribution to the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. This date coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the rebuilt Cathedral and could give real impetus to recognition of the growing diversity of Coventry's own communities and a world-wide focus on the issues of peace and reconciliation in a troubled world.

Coventry is (demographically speaking) a relatively young city, and with the growth of newly established communities is getting younger. There is a real chance to **focus on young people** and their creativity through projects such as: Creative Partnerships; schools with specialisms in arts and sport; working with University facilities and activities; supporting music, media and community radio; exciting projects like the 'Space of Possibilities', which sets out an amazing perspective on the City's future. There is the opportunity to make young people and their interests an important element of cultural development.

The growth of **major events** at the Skydome and the Ricoh Stadium, the continued success of existing events like Godiva and the Jazz Festivals, a **growing city centre programme of animation** and a **more co-ordinated promotion of the City's heritage** are all seen as offering potential to develop the **visitor economy**, as well as attracting more of Coventry's and the sub-region's shoppers to the city centre.

There are opportunities for improved **community facilities** both in the Building Schools for the Future programme and in the Council's planned review of community centres. A full review of community access, which draws on other sites like libraries and faith community facilities, could help ensure improved local provision throughout the city. It will also help to promote a greater equality in the availability and take-up of cultural activities across Coventry's residents and address the gaps in access to and usage of facilities and programmes identified in the city's surveys. The imaginative use and influence on planning within the City will give the opportunity of developing clubs through 106 agreements. This linked with the investment in new approaches with some of the existing industrial sports grounds will address some of the issues identified within consultation.

Above and beyond the potential identified here, those consulted also pointed to **new partnership opportunities** within and across cultural sectors and for **linking culture** with a **wide range of regeneration, community safety, health, education and environmental initiatives**.

## **2.8 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

The views of those consulted have been summarised in the SWOT table below – providing the starting point for identifying the objectives and actions in the Cultural Strategy.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City's location and transport links</li> <li>• Ongoing regeneration projects</li> <li>• Diversity &amp; good community relations</li> <li>• Strong local communities</li> <li>• Household Surveys as basis for policy</li> <li>• Strong array of cultural facilities</li> <li>• Visitor attraction in Transport Museum</li> <li>• Ricoh Arena – regional facility</li> <li>• Two universities</li> <li>• CVOne city centre management</li> <li>• Performing Arts Service</li> <li>• Strong events, Godiva, Jazz, Carnival</li> <li>• Strong local performance and music scene</li> <li>• Creative Partnerships</li> <li>• Outreach work by cultural facilities</li> <li>• Community sports clubs</li> <li>• Library network and activities</li> <li>• Coventry Sports Foundation</li> <li>• Cathedral as icon</li> <li>• Design and innovation</li> <li>• ICE initiative for cultural industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Image of Coventry – internal and external</li> <li>• Lack of past strategic direction for culture – shelving of policies and plans</li> <li>• Negative views of 'culture', innovation</li> <li>• Perception of Cathedral and its role</li> <li>• Weaknesses in sports and community facilities</li> <li>• Access to University facilities</li> <li>• City Centre 'lacks buzz'</li> <li>• Coventry Sports Centre</li> <li>• Failing Leisure Trust</li> <li>• Support for community sports</li> <li>• Marketing of 'what's on'</li> <li>• Views of Council and role</li> <li>• Lack of leadership</li> <li>• Limited development funding</li> <li>• Bureaucracy for project funding</li> <li>• Events dependence on Council funds</li> <li>• Limited visitor economy and drop in visitors to Cathedral</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth of the City</li> <li>• Diversification of city centre</li> <li>• Growth of evening economy</li> <li>• Development of creative enterprise</li> <li>• Links with schools for creativity</li> <li>• World centre for Peace and Reconciliation</li> <li>• 2012 linked to Cathedral 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary</li> <li>• New iconic and high profile events</li> <li>• Focus on young people</li> <li>• Specialist Colleges, School Sports Network</li> <li>• School based facilities</li> <li>• Newly formed Sports Trust</li> <li>• Major events at Ricoh, Skydome</li> <li>• Promotion of Cathedral and heritage</li> <li>• Development of visitor economy</li> <li>• Improved community facilities</li> <li>• Partnerships with health, education, environment and regeneration</li> <li>• Improved links with the sub-region</li> <li>• Greater use of volunteers</li> <li>• Increasingly diverse and exciting social mix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to 'make the case' for culture</li> <li>• Failure to establish effective leadership for culture</li> <li>• Failure to set or achieve ambitious goals</li> <li>• Failure to grasp that support for culture involves a change of attitude from the past</li> <li>• Limited imagination or innovation</li> <li>• Other priorities for Council and partners</li> <li>• Funding reductions for key facilities</li> <li>• No funding for development</li> <li>• Overshadowed by other places</li> <li>• Failure to support the 'growth agenda'</li> <li>• Failure to connect with Coventry's communities</li> </ul>

## Appendix E

### Overview of the Policy Context for the Strategies

#### 1. Making the Links – Coventry’s Policy Priorities

##### 1.1 The Vision for Coventry

The Cultural Strategy needs to support, the vision, objectives and priorities of key policies for Coventry. In this way it will be clear that cultural development is not an ‘add-on’ or option that can be ignored or placed low on the City’s agenda.

Coventry City Council has adopted a vision for Coventry;

*"Coventry to be a growing accessible city where people choose to live, work and be educated and businesses choose to invest"<sup>2</sup>*

Clear messages about this vision arose at a visioning event held with the Coventry Partnership in January 2006:

*‘... – people at the meeting wanted: a vibrant city; a better city centre; a solid economic base; to encourage more affluent people to live in the city and to encourage students to stay along with the incubator businesses that can come from concentration of 2 universities. This was pulled together into a number of statements about Coventry "as a premier city at the leading edge of sustainability, design, equality and diversity" which is:*

- *Proud of its image and heritage*
- *At the heart of its sub-region*
- *Well connected and growing*
- *Expanding, has a diverse city centre, consists of safe and vibrant communities*
- *Where everybody has access to a mix of jobs and housing, in a high quality, built, green and healthy environment.’*

And the role of the City centre was highlighted:

*‘Improving the city centre is a key priority for the council and for local people. ‘*

*‘The city centre is crucial to the growth agenda and improving the attractiveness of the city as a location that people choose to live work and be educated in and for businesses to invest in’.*

This describes a vision where culture, knowledge-based industry and the expression and enjoyment of creativity are at the heart of where Coventry wants to be.

Cultural development needs to take its place alongside the Council’s priorities for education, health, community safety, clean and green and the active promotion of equality.

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<sup>2</sup> Developing the City Council’s Vision: Report to Cabinet, CCC December 2006

## 1.2 The Growth Agenda – the Local Development Framework

Coventry has been chosen by Central Government as one of its New Growth Points which gives it a range of targets for increasing its number of dwellings and its population. The City could see an increase in its population to as high as 370,000 people with it serving a sub-regional population of over 1m people.

Consultation on the growth of the city is currently underway as part of the development of the *Local Development Framework* and will lead to a final decision on the growth target by 2009. In the meantime, there are key elements of the city's growth, identified in consultation, which are of relevance to the cultural strategy including:

- Creating employment through attracting new employers and providing an environment for home-grown enterprises to flourish
- Significantly improving the quality of design, maintenance and accessibility of buildings and spaces
- Addressing the 'mono-cultural' nature of the city centre through extending current programmes to increase the range of offices, residential and other uses.

A planned growth in Coventry's population calls for a commensurate planning in cultural provision, indeed successful growth will be partially dependant on the quality of the 'cultural offer' of the City.

## 1.3 The Community Plan

Coventry's Community Plan, set out in *Progress Through Prevention: Community Plan 2005-10* and in *Progress Through Prevention: A refreshed Local Area Agreement for Coventry*, focuses on two underpinning themes:

- equality, developing 'a shared vision of belonging and involvement for all of Coventry's communities'
- neighbourhoods, improving 'the quality of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods'.

Its strategic themes look to Coventry's communities benefiting from:

- Healthier lives with more rapid improvements in the priority neighbourhoods
- Better quality housing with a better mix of type and tenure of housing in neighbourhoods
- Improved public transport particularly for priority neighbourhoods
- Increased community safety with less crime and anti-social behaviour
- Environmental improvements including more attractive parks and open spaces
- Improve employment and build an enterprise society including stimulating the knowledge-based economy
- Encourage access to education and training and provide people with the skills for business success, innovation and growth.



The Community Plan's strategic theme on Culture sets out as priorities to:

- ensure that Coventry's cultural life including libraries, sport, physical activity, parks and open spaces, heritage and arts, enhance the needs of communities
- enrich individual lives, strengthen communities, improve places where people live, promote health and build the local economy through the city's cultural life.

And the Plan's emphasis is on increasing community participation in sport, arts, heritage and other cultural activities.

The Plan also identifies priority 'Communities of Interest':

- Children and young people – to experience improved quality of life particularly in priority neighbourhoods and disadvantaged communities
- Older People – to experience improved quality of life, high quality services and opportunities for playing an active role
- Physical and Sensory Impaired People, and those with mental health and learning disabilities – improved quality of life including access to services

These emphases, on access, participation and a wide range of factors which make for a good quality of life for everyone in Coventry will be reflected in the Cultural Strategy.

#### **1.4 The Community Cohesion Strategy**

Coventry's growing and increasingly diverse communities make community cohesion a critical quality of life issue – one to which there is a positive response within Household Surveys in the City. In *A Community Cohesion Strategy for Coventry City Council* community cohesion is defined as:

*'common vision and sense of belonging, valuing of diversity, similar life opportunities, strong and positive relationships between people'.*

Noting that:

*The particular challenge of this definition of community cohesion is that it requires the recognition and indeed the celebration, that people and communities in Coventry are different and have different needs, whilst at the same time promoting equality of opportunity and the understanding that Coventry's communities have much in common.*

*Quality of life and, in particular, the local environment, can often lay at the heart of how people feel about where they live – both their local neighbourhood and their city.*

The strategy sets out objectives for community cohesion:

- To develop a sense of belonging and involvement
- Appreciation and positive valuing of diversity

- Ensuring similar life opportunities
- Developing strong and positive relationships.

These are clearly objectives which cultural involvement can help to promote and with the increasing numbers of 'new arrivals' to Coventry – African people (Somalia, Nigeria), Eastern Europeans (particularly Poles), plus refugees and asylum-seekers from a range of countries there will be increasing need for services including education, housing as well as support for cultural expression

## 1.5 Coventry's Children and Young People's Plan

Children and young people are Coventry's future and the Cultural Strategy needs to address their needs. The Children and Young People's Plan brings together a wide-ranging group of service providers to tackle the well-being of children and young people and has five main aims:

**Being Healthy:** aim is for *children and young people to have healthy lifestyles which maximise their potential to physical, mental, emotional and sexual wellbeing*

**Staying Safe:** aim is for *children and young people to feel safe and protected from harm. Children and young people feel part of their local neighbourhood and community and behave in a way which enables them to fulfil their potential and that of their city and neighbourhood*

**Enjoying and Achieving:** aim for *children in Early Years to have the foundation for happy, healthy and successful lives. Children and young people's achievements and aspirations have been fulfilled to the benefit of themselves, their communities and neighbourhoods.*

**Making a Positive Contribution:** aim is to embed *Prevention, Partnership, and Participation as fundamental to the approach Coventry is taking to the delivery of children and young people's services and therefore will be reflected in all activities which aim to improve outcomes*

**Having Economic Wellbeing:** aim is for *children and young people's achievements and aspirations to have been fulfilled to the benefit of themselves, their communities and neighbourhoods*

Cultural activities including play, promotion of active lifestyles, and expressions of creativity will make a considerable contribution to realising these objectives for young people.

## 2. The Regional Context

### 2.1 The Economic Context

Coventry's Cultural Strategy must also link with the regional context. Advantage West Midlands' *An overview of delivering advantage: The West Midlands Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2004-2010* sets out objectives for the region as:

- Develop a diverse and dynamic business base – including promoting creative talent and developing the visitor economy
- Regenerate communities – addressing inequalities and ensuring training and employment opportunities
- Creating the conditions for growth – through transport, ICT
- Promoting a learning and skillful region – including addressing skills gaps, encouraging young entrepreneurs and retaining graduates
- Focus on six regeneration zones – which include Coventry
- High Technology Corridors – including Coventry and the sub-region to support diversified and innovative business
- Developing business clusters – including tourism and leisure and screen and new media

The importance of developing the knowledge-based creative economy for Coventry and the region as a whole is underlined by this strategy and by a recent report on the creative industries<sup>3</sup> noted the importance of software and computer services to the creative sector with publishing and arts and antiques trade also important and fashion important. It notes examples of initiatives for creative business including Electric Wharf in Coventry and the Creative Partnerships programme working with schools and the important links with Universities and tourism.

## **2.2 The Regional Cultural Context**

The Regional Cultural Consortium, West Midlands Life, has produced a Cultural Strategy that has now completed its period but is still relevant to Coventry's cultural development. It set out as its aims to make the West Midlands a very special place through culture which would:

- Bring national and international recognition
- Attract visitors to cultural attractions
- Promote local and sub-regional diversity
- Preserve and renew cultural activities
- Promote innovation and experiment
- Promote cultural education, excellence and quality
- Promote the greatest range of cultural activities
- Address gaps in provision and spread good practice
- Increase access and social inclusion in cultural activities
- Promote networking and information
- Support the economic contribution of culture and cultural businesses
- Retain creative talent in the region

The regional context for cultural development is also set by the regional cultural agencies for sport, arts, heritage and libraries.

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<sup>3</sup> Creative Industries: Key Questions on Regional Impact, West Midlands GO, September 2004

## 2.3 Sport Regional Context

For sport in England Sport England is the lead agency for sport in England and developed the national framework for sport which identifies two strands of delivery – the national strand and the community delivery for sport. The delivery system for sport is all about connecting people taking part and local deliverers with policy makers and investors in a simple and coordinated way. The system has two clear aims:

- To increase the number of people taking part in sport and recreation especially amongst the hard to reach
- To build sporting pathways to support young people to achieve their full potential and sustain higher levels of participation

The national vision for sport in England is:

***‘To make England the most active and successful sporting nation in the world.’***

The regional plan for sport in the West Midlands will contribute to achieving this vision. The aim or mission for the plan is:

**‘To significantly increase participation in sport within all age and social groups, leading to improvements in health and other social and economic benefits and providing the basis for progression into higher levels of performance, for those with the talent and desire to progress.’**

This will be delivered through seven key objective areas

- Increasing levels of participation in club and community sport
- Improving levels of sports performance
- Widening access to sport
- Improving the health and well being of people through sport
- Creating safer and stronger communities through sport
- Improving education through PE and sport
- Benefiting the economy through sport

Sport England are striving for the regional plan for sport connects with the plans and activities of other major regional and local partners and that sport and physical activity becomes a theme in other regional policies and plans. The aim is that the plan will have a positive effect on:

- the Regional Economy Strategy
- the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy
- the Regional Cultural Strategy
- the Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (which will become the Regional Spatial Strategy on completion of the new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act)
- the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action.

This regional plan for sport also needs to connect with local plans and strategies

## 2.4 Arts Regional Context

For the arts, **Arts Council England** (ACE) as a national organisation reviewed its *Ambitions for the Arts* in 2006. Until 2008 it has adopted the following six priorities:

- Taking Part in the Arts
- Children and Young People
- The Creative Economy
- Vibrant Communities
- Internationalism
- Celebrating Diversity

ACE West Midlands is in process of developing a new relationship with Coventry City Council, after the termination of the Strategic Arts Partnership (this initiative is coming to an end nationally). Key strands for collaboration will be based on the agreed priorities of: Internationalism; Taking Part; Creative Economy. An agreement will be drawn up and adopted during 2008.

ACE WM is also very committed to arts for children and young people and using arts to tackle social exclusion, so will not restrict its interest in Coventry to the three priorities. It also continues to provide grants to Regularly Funded Organisations in the City, including the Belgrade Theatre, Creative Partnerships and AMT.

## **2.4 Museums, Archives, Libraries Regional Context**

For the museums, libraries and archives sector **MLA West Midlands** has set out its priorities for 2004-2007 which includes objectives relevant to Coventry's Cultural Strategy including:

- Work to develop a joint marketing approach across museums, archives and libraries
- Development of adult basic skills
- Create a programme of Cultural entitlement for the West Midlands and work with Museums, Libraries Archives and other cultural providers to develop comprehensive provision for creative cultural experiences for each child to age 16 in the context of family, school and community
- Support for museums, libraries and archives in evaluating their core services and respond to needs of current, intending and new audiences
- Strategic development of collections to increase their quality and diversity
- Support regional participation in the Knowledge Web – focus on designated collections in museums, libraries and archives

## **3. Coventry's Cultural Sector**

The Cultural Strategy needs to establish links with the policy priorities and research findings of recent documents produced to guide the various elements of the cultural sector.

### **3.1 Coventry City Council – key cultural plans**

Coventry City Council's ***Culture, Leisure and Libraries Strategic Plan*** for 2006/7 to 2008/9 sets out the Council's key priorities in relation to the cultural sector through six objectives:

- 1. Support people from all communities to attain their potential through study support, adult education and other cultural and leisure activities
- 2. Widen opportunities for adult learning and participation in cultural and leisure activities as a way of promoting community cohesion and increasing employability
- 3. Improve the quality of opportunity for participation in libraries, leisure, adult education and parks and open spaces
- 4. Support the development of healthy and safe communities by increasing participation in library, leisure and cultural services
- 5. Develop and input into the implementation of major libraries, cultural and leisure development projects to increase access, and quality of opportunities, and raise the profile, attractiveness and liveability of the city
- 6. To improve access to cultural, leisure, library and adult education service and opportunities across the City regardless of the provider.

Major projected achievements for the plan include:

- New building for Tile Hill Library and Learning Centre to open in autumn 2007
- Completion of library at Caludon Castle school opening in autumn 2007.
- Coventry Transport Museum new business plan for October 2006
- Delivery of the Coombe Park management plan for April 2008

The Council's **strategy for Play, 'Something to do'** (2007) sets out a comprehensive programme of activities in response to national priorities and to the need and opportunities for children's play in response to issues like obesity. Consultation for the strategy identified 10 outcomes which are sought as priorities:

**Outcome 1**

- More children and young people have access to informal, natural and environmental play areas

**Outcome 2**

- More children have the opportunity to access parks and open spaces

**Outcome 3**

- Increased awareness of the importance of play amongst City Council staff and councillors, partner organisations, parents and residents

**Outcome 4**

- More children and young people are actively involved in the design, development and delivery of play opportunities

**Outcome 5**

- Better co-ordination and management of the delivery of play opportunities

**Outcome 6**

- Fewer children and young people experiencing barriers to play

**Outcome 7**

- More children leading healthy lifestyles

**Outcome 8**

- More children and young people have the opportunity to experience 'safe risks'

**Outcome 9**

- A wider range of better quality and constantly improving play opportunities for children and young people

### Outcome 10

- More opportunities for families to play together

These outcomes are ones which the Cultural Strategy will seek to support.

For sport and leisure in the City a **Sport and Physical Activity Strategy - facility strategy** produced in September 2006 which built upon the **playing pitch strategy** produced in 2007. The facility strategy for sport was aimed at promoting active lifestyles and enhancing the quality of life for Coventry people through the development of a sustainable network of accessible, high quality sport, recreation and fitness facilities, offering a wide range of activities with opportunities for everybody to participate and to progress to achieve their sporting potential

The facility strategy has two objectives. These are;

1. *To provide facilities where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities can get started, stay and succeed in sport with access to the right facilities, equipment, coaching and encouragement*
2. *To ensure that facilities are available to meet the particular needs of groups in the city who may experience barriers to becoming involved in sport and fitness activities*

The strategy identifies the national, regional and local context of sport. This identifies the network of sport and leisure facilities is made up of specialist and community facilities provided by the public sector (City Council, schools and further education), voluntary sector (sports clubs), commercial/private sector (professional sport, commercial fitness, hotels, and other centres,) and others which include charitable organisations, trusts, independent schools, universities, faith organisations, community organisations.

The facility mix within the city consists of sports clubs that own their facilities. Swimming pools, Artificial sports pitches. Sports Halls (4 badminton court size and above), public Health & Fitness Provision, private Health & Fitness Clubs and Schools. It also identifies the Significant Current Facility Developments (underway and planned)

Strong reference is made to Building Schools for the Future (BSF) where Coventry are included in Wave 4 of the investment programme. Other potential sources of revenue are identified as Public Private Partnerships (PPP), Section 106 agreements and other external funding partners such as Sport England (Community Investment Fund) and the Football Foundation (capital and grass roots funding streams).

The summary of assessment identified the following outcomes which included a cross boundary assessment was carried out for sports halls, swimming pools and public health and fitness. Quite clearly this demonstrates that other neighbouring authorities see Coventry's as a key provider of facilities in greater Warwickshire.

From the assessment undertaken, it can be seen that:

- There is an undersupply of 12 badminton courts
- There is an undersupply of water space of 822 m<sup>2</sup>
- For public 'pay and play' health and fitness there is an unmet demand of 654 stations

- Synthetic pitch provision – slight oversupply of 0.9 pitches,
- There is a need to increase access and quality of provision

The strategy gives a clear indications of trends in physical activity and sport in the City and in a broader national context.

The overall vision of the playing pitch strategy is:

*'By 2020 Coventry City Council will endeavour to provide and have assisted in the provision of an appropriate distribution and range of high quality playing pitches and associated facilities which will provide opportunities for participation and potential to be reached in pitch sports by residents from all sections of the community.'*

The achievement of the strategic aim should be carried out through the implementation of the following objectives: They have been developed from the key issues emerging from the assessment report identified in the strategy these objectives fall into a number of groups; General issues and actions, Management of facility planning and delivery.

#### *General*

1. Increase the quality and capacity of existing outdoor sports facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of NGBs, affiliated leagues, local sports clubs and CCC.
2. Meet geographic shortfall through the implementation of improvements and new developments in areas of poor pitch provision, in order to ensure the long term viability of schemes.
3. Support development programmes and address latent demand as identified in the assessment report, particularly in relation to girls and women's sports and in areas of geographical shortfall.
4. Establish a viable infrastructure of voluntary and privately owned sports clubs in partnership with them.
5. Current shortfall in the provision of cricket and hockey facilities needs to be addressed urgently.

#### *Management*

1. Consider the creation of community sports pitches, or a degree of self management/control within specifically identified parks and open spaces; in partnership with voluntary sector organisations, schools, specialist sports colleges etc.
2. Identify areas of open space that have the potential to contribute to outdoor sports provision. Including unattached education playing fields, parks and recreation grounds.
3. Within a phased programme, improve the quality, security and defensibility of pitch sports facilities including their ancillary amenities such as changing accommodation and car parking.
4. Work to ensure appropriate resources are made available to maintain CCC and private sites to an appropriate standard.
5. Identify outdoor sports facilities, which have space capacity and could, with investment/development assist is accommodating latent and future demand, in tern increasing participation levels.
6. Develop a policy within the revised UDP along with supplementary planning guidance that would seek the provision of additional high quality sports facilities, in



lieu of the loss of existing facilities, to meet the consequent suppressed and future demand.

### *Planning*

The following objectives are identified in the strategy that should be considered as supplementary planning guidance:

- In new housing developments developers should ensure that proposals cater for all the open space needs of residents. This should include amenity green space, children's play provision, natural and semi-natural green spaces as well as outdoor sports facilities.
- Developers should ensure that sufficient playing pitch space exists in the catchment area to meet the needs of the people living in the new housing development.
- CCC will ensure that the playing pitch database is updated on a regular basis and provide appropriate resources to undertake this task in order to present an accurate, up-to-date picture of playing pitch adequacy at any given time.
- For playing pitch space for developments of less than 100 dwellings or where provision would prevent the creation of high density development, or where existing playing pitch provision is already in excess of need, CCC will seek to negotiate a commensurate sum towards the improvement of existing and accessible facilities.
- Any new pitch facilities which are provided by a developer as part of a housing development should be large enough to cater effectively for the intended use, be appropriately sited and designed and be practical to maintain. It is essential that facilities be designed, managed and maintained and developed for the social, economic and environmental well being of the community.
- There will be situations when existing (off-site) recreational space within the catchment of the housing site may be enhanced as an alternative to new provision on site, if this is better placed to meet the recreational needs of the occupiers of the new dwellings. This is particularly appropriate where:
- The existing provision of playing pitch space in the catchment area exceeds the minimum standard but people's needs would not be met due to the low quality and therefore capacity of existing provision.
- Where a planning application for residential development forms part of a larger housing site, or area, wider open space requirements should be considered for the site or area as a whole. In these cases CCC should prepare an open spaces plan to ensure that new open space, including playing pitches as appropriate are provided in a co-ordinated way. As part of this plan developers may be asked to contribute to an area-based fund for open space provision in the locality.

The Playing Pitch strategy goes into further detail of the short fall of playing pitches within the City

Coventry's Youth Service has produced an ***Art, Sport and ICT Curriculum Development Plan*** (2007) which aims to extend the use of art, sport and ICT activity within the youth work curriculum to ensure that programmes are sufficiently variable in content to appeal to young people who have a diverse range of needs and interests.

The aim of the Youth Service is to engage young people in personal, social and emotional development opportunities that are challenging, supportive, exciting, and fun and that enable them to remain involved in lifelong learning. The national policy 'Youth Matters' establishes a cultural standard as a minimum 'Local Offer' which includes:

- access to 2 hours per week of sporting activity
- access to 2 hours of other constructive activities in clubs, youth groups and classes
- opportunities to make a positive contribution to the community through volunteering, a wide range of other recreational, sporting, cultural and enriching experiences
- some enjoyable places to spend time.

For Coventry's arts sector, the **Strategic Arts Policy**, (2004) was developed but never formally adopted by the City Council; it is due for review and completion in 2008. Its themes are:

**Sustaining Creativity:** to support services for professional and voluntary creative practitioners; audience development

**Access and Diversity:** address needs of Coventry's arts practitioners, community groups and arts projects; develop arts activities and programming for culturally diverse communities

**Social Inclusion:** promote and support the use of the arts to break down barriers to social inclusion; support arts and skills training which can provide pathways to formal education or employment

**Arts and Regeneration:** establish Coventry as a place of artistic vitality and innovation and boost Cultural Tourism; develop a city-wide network of venues used for professional and amateur arts; support the maintenance of Coventry's arts buildings; develop a city-wide programme of arts events, making imaginative use of Coventry's buildings, spaces and facilities; develop an ambitious approach to Public Art, regenerate and animate the city's public spaces and support Coventry's creative industries

**Arts and Lifelong Learning:** establish a coherent and co-ordinated approach to arts education and training across the city; provide fully accessible spaces for wide range of arts training and education; support the development of affordable provision (studios, equipment, professional expertise) available for artists to develop their skills; support arts organisations to develop educational and training policies for staff and audiences.

In 2004 consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Page were asked to investigate the performance venue needs for Coventry, a critical issues for the Cultural Strategy. This report was produced under a previous administration and was never formally adopted. The key recommendations of the **Performance Venue Strategy**, are:

**Low priority for a Civic Hall:** Coventry already has a range of spaces and facilities which meet most of the needs for the traditional civic, town or city hall. The consultants proposed that Coventry should invest more strategically across a range of existing facilities, and adapt civic function to fit into existing or new spaces

**Mid-scale performance space (500-600 seat):** relates directly to the Butts Theatre, City College issue, currently the only medium-scale performance space in the city. There is a clear requirement for a space which can operate as a good quality 500 – 600 theatre, affordable for community hire, accommodate regular, high quality entertainment programmes alongside non-professional and professional theatre, dance and music bookings

**Studio Spaces:** Coventry has very limited facilities for arts practitioners to create and rehearse work. Practical, flexible, accessible and affordable studios would stimulate creative activity, accelerate creative industries development, and increase participation across the community

**Better co-ordination and marketing:** Coventry, compared to many towns and cities, has plenty of venues, and needs improved co-ordination and communication between performance venues, agencies and practitioners to ensure that the City makes the most of them. Coherent planning between agencies and venues, driven by effective marketing, would make a massive difference to audience development in Coventry.

For the heritage sector the **Coventry Heritage Strategy** (2004) sets out five aims:

- *Discovery* – encouraging contributions from government agencies, City Council, museums, universities etc to contribute to knowledge about the heritage and encourage use and engagement through ‘cataloguing of Company records through to preparing a time capsule by children
- *Conserving* – buildings, objects and sites
- *Learning from* – promotion of access to heritage sites and collections and providing quality interpretation, plus education programmes for all ages.
- *Celebrating* – communication about heritage and promotion of City’s heritage to visitors and investors and to encourage pride amongst local people. Continued promotion of famous Coventrians – from Lady Godiva to Sir Frank Whittle
- *Building a better future* – stimulation of regeneration and neighbourhood renewal, promoting a positive image of the City to visitors, investors and local people. Heritage playing a key role in tourism strategy and events programme. Heritage and culture promotion leading to new jobs and increased economic activity. Development of museums and heritage attractions for local people and visitors. BME communities ‘will have opportunities to celebrate their heritage and to share this across the city’.

### 3.2 Coventry Cathedral

Coventry Cathedral has a world-wide profile and remains a significant symbol for the City. The **Cathedral’s draft Development plan for 2007-2009** is based on five principles, defining the Cathedral as:

- A place for Spiritual renewal

- A world centre for peace and reconciliation
- A resource for City, diocese and nation
- The home of a developed and nurtured community
- An experience that affects every visitor

Actions within the four main areas of activity, including Tourism and Events, seek to:

- Provide a first class visitor attraction and place of pilgrimage that is unique, memorable and presents the good news of reconciliation to each and every visitor
- Enhance the Cathedral's role as a resource for the Diocese and the City of Coventry

Significant improvements to the Cathedral facilities will include

- New lighting and sound systems
- Enhanced quality for Cathedral choirs

A key target of the business plan is the development of the Peace and Reconciliation Centre, planned to open in 2012, the Golden Jubilee of the consecration of the Cathedral. The Centre will provide a place to celebrate the history of the modern Cathedral and of the Community of the Cross of Nails, improve the experience of visitors and provide a venue for conferences on peace and related themes. The opening of the new centre will be part of a programme of activities, which will include exhibitions, tours, concerts and royal visits.

Visitors to the Cathedral are a significant contribution to tourism for the City Centre. Current targets are to attract 140,000 per year. The theme of peace and reconciliation provides Coventry with a world class brand, already reflected through the extensive twinning arrangements with cities and towns world wide. Partnership working between the City and the Cathedral will be vital elements in seeing the Cathedral reach its full potential for national and international visitors and for the people of Coventry and the region.

Plans to improve education and interpretation include

- Programme of specialist education events for schools
- Improved tours with multi-media support
- New published visitor information, faith film and guides
- New exhibitions and improved exhibition facilities
- Improved web site
- Events for specific markets including families in school holidays, concerts of classical/choral and jazz music
- Creative Arts School and Cathedral based project inspired by the Cathedral's story of peace and reconciliation

### **3.3 Coombe Park**

Coombe Park, to the east of the City Centre, constitutes another significant heritage and environmental asset for the city, and has seen visitor figures more than double in the last

twenty years to stand at 450,000 in 2000. **The Coombe Country Park Management Plan** (2006-2011) focuses on three areas

- Management of visitor services
- Management of the historic landscape
- Nature conservation

The plan seeks to balance management of the historic landscape and need to preserve habitat and encourage wildlife with visitor management, and in the wider context of goals for all the Coventry's parks:

- Own heritage merit
- Cultural links with past, sense of place and identity
- Locations for civic celebrations, community festivals etc
- Bring communities together on common ground
- Important for health and well being
- Value of community engagement and establishing people's needs and aspirations
- Potential for volunteer working, including in educational work

The strategy looks at expanding use of Coombe Park but without damaging the landscape or impacting on habitat. With this in mind the emphasis is on off-peak use, with a focus on the over-50s and the parent and toddler market.

### **3.4 The Library Service**

Coventry has a proactive and dynamic library service engaging with 2 million people and issuing 1.5m books. One third of all residents – 100,000 people – used a library in 2006, and libraries reach out to all of Coventry's diverse communities, with services for children, young people and older people. Libraries also handle over 300,000 enquiries per year

Community libraries have benefited from an extensive refurbishment programme over the last seven years and the Library service has extensive experience of imaginative partnership working to enhance literacy and engagement with reading. This has been achieved from a baseline in 2001 when the service was the service was rated as poor in the Best Value Review of that year. Major plans in 2007/09 include the development of a multi-activity centre and library in Tile Hill and a new library in Whoberley.

Libraries in the City are modernizing into community hubs, and the first pilot One Stop Shop is being developed at Bell Green, with a second pilot proposed for Tile Hill in 2007.

### **3.5 Urban Design Guidance**

The quality of the built environment, and the particular challenges of Coventry's City Centre, make urban design a key element in the future cultural development of the City. The **Coventry Urban Design Guidance** has the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and is an accompaniment to the emerging Coventry Local Development Framework. It sets out the Principles of Urban Design:

- Enhancing townscape and landscape character by reflecting locally distinct patterns of development
- Strengthening the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development that clearly defines the boundaries between public and private space
- Providing high quality public spaces which are safe uncluttered, active and easily identifiable
- Making places that inter-connect and are easy to move through
- Ensuring that developments are readily understood by users
- Encouraging developments which can adapt to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions
- Promoting diversity through mixes of use which work together to create vital and viable places
- Ensuring that developments are sustainable in terms of their design, layout and density

## Appendix F

The draft strategy has been circulated to a wide variety of organisations, including regional agencies and made available on the council website for comment.

### List of Individuals Consulted

Name	Organisation
Ken Adamson	Coventry City Council
Cllr Arrowsmith	Coventry City Council
Carl Bainbridge	Coventry City Council
Steve Banbury	Coventry Voluntary Services
David Bancroft	Coventry City Council
Prof. Julie Barlow	Coventry University
David Barratt	Frontline AV
Colin Bell	Frontline AV
Rashid Bhayat	Coventry City Council
Sarah Bond	Arts Council England West Midlands
Paul Breed	Coventry Sports Foundation
Pete Chambers	Backbeat
Liz Cooper	Ricoh Arena
Alice Davey	Coventry City Council
Jon Docherty	Coventry City Council
Keith Draper	Coventry Civic Society
Owen Dutton	Coventry City Council (Performing Arts Service)
Ces Edwards	Coventry City Council
Laura Elliott	Artspace
Richie Elms	Coventry City Council
Mick Emerson	CVOne
Daniel Finnan	Hillz Radio
Cllr Kevin Foster	Coventry City Council
Sally Giles	Coventry City Council
Hamish Glen	Belgrade Theatre
Cathryn Goodwin	Arts and Media Training
Andrew Green	Coventry City Council
Colin Green	Coventry City Council (CYLP Team)
Bill Hall	ACCOL
Christine Hamilton	ICE, Coventry University
Siobhan Harrison	BBC
Kath Healion	Alan Higgs Centre
Jo Hibbard	Coventry Cathedral
Mark Hinton	Vision
Lee House	Coventry City Council
Clare Huby	Coventry City Council
Jane Hytch	Imagineer
Very Revd John Irvine	Coventry Cathedral
Sarah Jackson	Coventry City Council (Performing Arts Service)
Jeanne Jenner	Arts and Media Training
Harneek Kandola	Coventry City Council
Bob Keith	Groundwork
Helen Kelly	Coventry City Council

Angie Kokes	Henley College (LSP Theme Group Leader – learning and training)
Niall McChesney	Coventry City Council
John McGuigan	Coventry City Council
Helen Meeke	Coventry Artists Network
Clare Mitchell	Regional Youth Unit, Government Office West Midlands
Simon Newman	Skydome
Bob Moore	Coventry City Council
Derek Nisbet	Talking Birds
Neil Parker	Coventry City Council
Charles Rayner	Ricoh Arena
Simon Rice	Coventry City Council
Cllr Gary Ridley	Coventry City Council
Alan Rivett	Warwick Arts Centre, Warwick University
Sarah Roach	Coventry City Council
Leslie Rowe	Coventry City Council
James Russell	Coventry City Council
Saleem Sheikh	CEMAP
Ashley Simpson	Coventry City Council
Mark Singlehurst	Coventry City Council
Hilary Snell	Coventry City Council
Balraj Somal	St Peter's Community Centre
Mike Tovey	Coventry University
Jo Trowsdale	Creative Partnerships
Graham Trusswell	Alan Higgs Centre (and Coventry Sports Foundation)
Roger Vaughan	Coventry City Council
Jenni Venn	Coventry City Council
Rob Wallis	CSW Sport
Darren Walter	Students' Union, Warwick University
Jane Waterhouse	CSW Sport