

LINKAGE AND LEVERAGE



# Northumberland's *Cultural*

Strategy 2002/2008



## Foreword



It may be a well-worn cliché that culture can mean many different things to many different people. But whether you deem culture to be a coalfield heritage of brass bands and bustling miners' welfare clubs or Northumbrian pipe music, Roman remains and the splendour of Alnwick Castle, one thing is certain: Northumberland is alive with culture, so rich and diverse it is difficult not to fall over it. So why do we need a Cultural Strategy?

Two years ago the Government asked every local authority to create and adopt a cultural strategy by December 2002, with the intention of promoting the cultural well being of the area. In Northumberland, the six district councils and the county council joined together to write a single strategy under the auspices of the Northumberland Strategic Partnership.



Culture has proved itself to be vital to Northumberland because it can assist in the regeneration of the county by providing jobs and economic return. It can be a catalyst for social change and can improve health. It can also help to highlight and promote the county's assets. Just as important however, it gives people pleasure and pride, inspires them and challenges minds and bodies.

Since January 2001, when the first consultation session was held, the Northumberland Cultural Strategy has gained significant momentum with the people of the county. It has been formed against the backdrop of demands for forward thinking solutions to old problems and the Foot and Mouth epidemic revealing the fragility of the rural economy. Everyone agrees on one thing though - culture has a major role to play in Northumberland's future.



At a strategic sub-regional level, the Northumberland Strategic Partnership is about to enter a new phase of activity as it becomes fully responsible for devolved funding from One NorthEast. The region is also poised to take centre stage with Newcastle Gateshead's bid to be European Capital of Culture in 2008 gaining the support of the British public in recent polls.

We need to capture the hearts and minds of everyone in the county to seize this opportunity and open up the doors of Northumberland's cultural heritage to envelop what we all hope will blossom on Tyneside. We must show not only what culture can do for Northumberland but how everyone can play an interactive role within a living culture which we will pass on to our children and grandchildren.



Without doubt, Northumberland is in the right place at the right time. The challenge for us all is to make sure that the infrastructure and funding is in place to ensure communities get the maximum benefit and that the high expectations of the people of Northumberland and the rest of the region are met.

This strategy sets out ways that will enable the next seven years to be ones of real cultural growth and achievement.

Michael Davey

Chairman, Northumberland Strategic Partnership



# Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Role of the Strategy
3. What Culture can achieve for Northumberland
4. Context
5. Principles and Process
6. Linkages to other Strategies
7. Key Priority Aims
  1. Marketing Northumberland and improving its strategic infrastructure
  2. Improving access to, and participation in, culture
  3. Improving the ways of working
  4. Providing an environment for sustainable cultural businesses
  5. High quality cultural education and training
  6. Information and communication technologies
8. Strategic Objectives and Indicative Actions
9. Delivery and Monitoring

## ANNEXES:

Glossary

Stakeholder Working Group



# 1. Executive Summary

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has asked every local authority to create and adopt a cultural strategy by December 2002, with the intention of promoting the cultural well being of the area. In Northumberland, the six district councils and the county council joined together to write a single strategy under the auspices of the Northumberland Strategic Partnership, one of the four sub-regional partnerships in the North East.

Culture is important to Northumberland because it can assist in the regeneration of the county by providing jobs and economic return. It can be a catalyst for social change and can improve health. It can also help highlight and promote the county's assets. Just as important however, cultural activity can give people pleasure and pride, inspire them and challenge minds and bodies.

Nearly 10% of the region's workforce is employed in cultural areas (over 100,000 people) and they contribute over £1 billion per year to the regional economy.

Work began on the strategy in 2000 with the formation of a stakeholder working group consisting of local authority, health services and regional agency representatives. This group in turn reported to a committee of senior representatives from public, private and third sector organisations.

Large-scale public consultation was conducted over 2001/2002 with well over 600 people being actively involved in creating the priorities and actions. They came from a mix of voluntary organisations, local authority departments, health service staff and creative industries. Their ideas were tested during widespread circulation of the draft strategy in early 2002, via a website and specially formed consultation sessions, and amendments were made.

The strategy was developed using cross cutting themes to encourage sustainability and centred largely on the following areas: arts, environment, heritage, sport and tourism.

It is a strategic framework that focuses on actions that will benefit the whole county. As agreed, each local authority and local strategic partnership will be able to use it to help them to form their own local delivery plans. Quite often the actions reflect current activity, structures and designations, if they have proved to represent good value.

The actions are indicative of areas of increased cultural activity. They are not intended to be the only routes through which people will enjoy culture in the county.

## Six Priority Aims

Marketing Northumberland and improving its strategic infrastructure

- Improve the tourism infrastructure including transport links
- Countywide coordinated approach to marketing
- Work with Newcastle Gateshead towards Capital of Culture 2008
- Promote flagships of Alnwick Garden, Hadrian's Wall and Woodhorn

Improving access to, and participation in, culture

- Empower communities, eg volunteering projects
- Remove barriers to accessing culture
- Use culture to improve health

Improving the ways that current organisations work

- Strengthen current partnerships or create new ones
- Prioritise sustainable community development initiatives

Providing an environment for sustainable cultural businesses

- Raise the standards of delivery
- Develop new cultural business interventions
- Continue research into the economic impact of culture

Assisting Northumberland to build a highly skilled workforce through high quality cultural education and training

- Use unique Northumberland culture for learning, especially for young people
- Develop skills through training, especially in tourism
- Build confidence and entrepreneurship

Using information and communication technologies to help culture flourish

- Strategy for ICT that will benefit local people and tourists

A range of local and countywide partnerships will deliver the strategy. Extra resources will be required to carry out the action plan. This will be found from a combination of new funding sources and more strategic spending of existing mainstream budgets.

The Northumberland Strategic Partnership will monitor the strategy in the first instance.



## 2. Role of the Strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to assist partners in Northumberland to deliver a far-reaching vision for improving the economic performance, employment levels, social inclusion and environment in a sustainable way. It will do this by promoting the cultural well being of the whole county.

It is also a pledge to sustain or create quality partnerships that can deliver greater cultural benefits and that will continue the process of consultative working that has defined the development of this strategy so far.

In turn, Northumberland with its distinctive heritage and ambitious new cultural projects will assist the region to deliver the massive change embodied in the Regional Economic Strategy.

Resources will be required to achieve these plans. This strategy will therefore be used by partners and by external organisations to make decisions about how their budgets will be spent. This will happen in two ways; existing mainstream funding will be used to improve services and lever in money from other sources, and new sources of income will have to be found. Strategic planning at a countywide and district level will be required, as well as prioritisation of projects and plans, and high levels of information gathering for effective case making.

The Northumberland Strategic Partnership believes that it holds the keys to unlocking the potential of its greatest asset - its people - and one of those keys is its profound belief in the regenerating power of Northumberland's own unique and constantly evolving culture.

This strategy lays out simple plans for reviving communities through sport and physical activity, the arts and creative industries, heritage, the environment and tourism development.

Culture will continue to be delivered and participated in locally and it will be available to everyone. In Northumberland the population includes minority ethnic people as well as people with disabilities who comprise one fifth of the population.

The critical factor in delivering this ambitious programme is partnership. This document has therefore been created to be a strategic framework for the huge range of organisations and individuals who deliver and participate in culture in Northumberland and to help them to play their part more effectively.

Every aspiration contained in this document has come directly from cultural stakeholders across every sector. It is therefore a strategy for Northumberland by its people and the plans of every community group; individual; local authority or local strategic partnership should be aided by it.

Indicative actions have been identified but they are not prescriptive routes for cultural activity to take. In fact, in many cases they represent current activity or structures that are proving to be effective at a local level. Cultural development within communities will continue to be locally distinctive. That is culture's power - it drives individuals to change.

### 3. What culture can achieve for Northumberland



In the last forty years Northumberland's traditional economic base has undergone a steady decline with the loss of many of its primary industries. In 2001 the Foot and Mouth crisis drastically highlighted the change that rural areas are experiencing.

The county is regenerating itself however, and is developing modern manufacturing industries such as pharmaceuticals, electronics and renewable energy. It is also building new infrastructure to encourage inward investment, with the provision of industrial sites and premises.

So what is the value of culture to Northumberland in the 21st century? Firstly, it can assist in the regeneration of the county by providing jobs and economic return. Secondly, it can be a catalyst for social change to help combat the serious problems faced by our communities. Thirdly, it can highlight and promote the county's assets, which is vital to the success of any other regeneration or inward investment programme. Just as important however, engagement with culture gives people pleasure, challenges their minds and bodies, gives them inspiration and pride and can bring about a strong desire to achieve something.

Culture could be described as the essence of Northumberland as it mirrors the collective well being of its people. It follows therefore, that a vibrant cultural landscape will improve the county's chances of succeeding in this new era.

Engagement in culture can make significant contributions to society as a whole. In Northumberland, stakeholders have brought forward examples of cultural projects tackling social exclusion, as they integrate people into their local communities and addressing community safety as they reduce the risk of people committing crimes or displaying anti-social behaviour.

Culture also teaches citizenship, with many projects relying on teamwork, fair play and self-discipline. Northumberland has many positive role models who promote these qualities, along with the fundamental necessity of communities and individuals to stay healthy.

Northumberland values its volunteers and recognises that with a sparse population in such a large geographic area, they are absolutely essential in promoting an active and inclusive county.

Northumberland's high quality environment is vital to its economic upturn. Cultural projects are key to unleashing the potential of both rural and urban landscapes and enhancing them for residents and visitors.

Culture also creates jobs and is acknowledged to be one of the region's fastest growing sectors, especially in the tourism field.

During the lifetime of this strategy, the region is poised to deliver 4 million additional visitors, 17,000 new jobs, £700 million of new income and £100 million additional spending on conferences, as a result of Newcastle Gateshead's bid for Capital of Culture 2008. Northumberland is a major player in this bid so could enjoy its share of the new cultural investment. This strategy will assist the county to implement the changes that will be necessary to prepare for this massive opportunity.



## 4. Context

Northumberland has a population of only 310,000, of whom 146,000 are economically active (i.e. in work or actively seeking work) and 50,000 are children attending schools in the county. Geographically it is the sixth largest county in England, with a land area of 500,000 hectares. Its population density is the lowest of all the English counties, with 250 less people per square kilometre than England as a whole. Over 50% of the population live in South East Northumberland. [Source: One NorthEast and Northumberland County Council]

The cultural landscape is influenced by these facts but also by the inspiration provided by the environmental borders: the Cheviots and North Pennines, the Scottish borders and the North Sea. The Tyneside conurbation is also very important to the population, and in return, Northumberland is their garden and their fresh air.

Northumberland contains a 400 square mile National Park, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: North Pennines and the Coast plus the most spectacular section of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. The National Park receives 1.4 million visits per annum and the Hadrian's Wall area in Northumberland, 1 million. Kielder Water visitor figures for 2000 were estimated at 404,000. The National Trust and English Heritage manage nationally significant properties in the county and, in the case of the former, substantial parts of the magnificent coastline.

From Northumbria Tourist Board research carried out in 1999, Northumberland has 4 out of the 10 highest scoring visitor attractions charging an entrance fee, with Cragside Country Park coming 2nd after Beamish Open Air Museum, Housesteads Roman Fort 4th, Bamburgh Castle 5th and Wallington Hall Gardens 6th.

Again, Northumberland scores very highly against the rest of the region in the top ten attractions not charging an admission. After Durham Cathedral, Wansbeck Riverside Country Park came 2nd with Plessey Woods Country Park, Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Country Park, Ashington and Brocksbushes Farm coming 5th, 6th and 7th respectively.

Northumberland's historic borders have also manifested themselves on the people and the places and that legacy is still tangible in modern times. The best-preserved Roman frontier in the world runs through the county and England's turbulent relationship with Scotland is physically represented in the stones of the Pele Towers and castles of North Northumberland.

The county is also a major contributor to the region's reputation for innovation and has an outstanding industrial and mining heritage that still has massive potential for interpretation and celebration. In the 21st century, however, innovative ways of working with renewable energy can lead the region towards new prosperity and environmental improvement through the development and application of "green" technology.

Given that most government funding is distributed on a per capita basis, Northumberland will only be able to seize its chances if it works together in an integrated way. Agencies and organisations must view themselves as part of a strategic whole, clearly linking themselves to the private and voluntary sectors and to communities.

Northumberland can offer unique qualities to the region and to the world outside. It has rich and impressive natural and historical assets, good geographical positioning being a gateway to Scotland and adjacent to the Lake District, vibrant urban centres and market towns, independent spirited villages and settlements and most of all - a distinct "personality".

## 5. Principles and Process



The recommendation by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport that each local authority should have a cultural strategy by December 2002 certainly added impetus to the process of creating a strategy. However, they were already demonstrating the role culture could play across a range of agendas. This strategy is a milestone, then, in the dynamic process in which practitioners, stakeholders and interested members of the public will continually develop Northumberland's cultural responses.

It must be stressed that no single organisation dominates cultural activity. The public sector certainly has a major role to play in coordination, funding and stewardship but the voluntary and private sector also contribute hugely to Northumberland's intricate cultural landscape. In fact, in no other area of economic activity are there such vital linkages between the voluntary and professional sectors. There is also a vast range of working patterns between the sectors that need to be considered and appreciated.

The purpose of this document is therefore to be a strategic framework for the county as a whole that will emphasize projects and partnerships that will affect everyone. It also however, provides a countywide overview that will allow for the implementation of local action plans, either through local authority departments or local strategic partnerships. These local action plans are at different stages of development but will consist of locally based and driven projects.

Detailed information has been gathered from a huge variety of sources including direct input from over 600 cultural stakeholders and members of the public. This extensive cultural audit has involved many people undertaking exercises to assess the merits of current activities and identifying improvements and opportunities for the future. This material has been added to the work that local authorities are undertaking to improve the lives of their communities. Regional agencies and the health sector have also contributed greatly to the process. There now exists a body of material that represents considerable cross-sectoral expertise in tourism, sport and physical activity, heritage, the arts and the environment.

Many of the ideas proposed in the action plan appear to be about relatively small-scale activities or organisations. This is entirely appropriate and mirrors the importance to Northumberland of projects that may focus on only a few individuals but that give the county regional or national recognition.

It also features new projects that will bring millions of pounds of funding into the county, with resultant employment opportunities and community benefits.

More importantly there is also a new spirit of cooperation and partnership working that the strategy development process has engendered. This will continue to be the way that Northumberland works in the future.

The strategy is not intended to cover every individual cultural pursuit or organisation. Instead it proposes how linkages will be made between cultural organisations and sectors that will lever more resources into Northumberland for the benefit of its communities, businesses and visitors.

The timescales in the document relate to the first two stages of the Regional Cultural Strategy that Culture North East is currently implementing.

## 6. Linkages to Other Strategies

The Northumberland Cultural Strategy has not been created in isolation. Other key strategies were developing their thinking at the same time so this document has both influenced them and been influenced by them.

Of particular importance are the following strategies:

- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Cultural Strategy
- One NorthEast's cluster development programme, particularly creative industries, digital and multimedia, tourism and food and drink
- Rural Action Plan
- Market Towns Initiative
- Valuing Our Environment
- Power of Place - the future of the historic environment
- Force for our Future - Government response to Power of Place
- North East Sport's Regional Strategy
- South East Northumberland/North Tyneside Regeneration Initiative Report
- Corridor of Opportunity Task Force's Summary Prospectus
- Northumberland Coalfield Environmental Enhancement Strategy
- Community Strategies
- Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site Management Plan
- Northumberland National Park Management Plan
- Northumberland Health Action Zone strategy
- Northumberland Care Trust strategy
- Leader Plus in North Northumberland and the North Pennines
- A1 North of Newcastle Multi Modal Study
- Northumberland Learning + Skills Council Local Strategic Plan
- Northumberland Coalfield Communities Heritage Initiative

## 7. Key Priority Aims

### Key Priority Aim 1

Northumberland will accelerate its renaissance by ensuring it is an attractive and celebrated place in which to live, work, visit and invest by improving its infrastructure and marketing its strengths to the region and beyond

*Key Agency: Northumberland County Council*

### Key Priority Aim 2

Northumberland will become more accessible and inclusive by developing needs-led programmes that allow individuals and communities to fully experience, participate in and benefit from cultural activity

*Key Agency: Local Authorities*

### Key Priority Aim 3

Northumberland will create the conditions in which new or existing organisations and partnerships can empower communities to improve their confidence and well being

*Key Agency: Northumberland Strategic Partnership*

### Key Priority Aim 4

Northumberland will provide an environment in which cultural entrepreneurs can run sustainable businesses

*Key Agency: Business Link for Northumberland*

### Key Priority Aim 5

Northumberland will build an adaptable and highly skilled workforce by raising participation and attainment through high quality cultural education and training

*Key Agency: Learning + Skills Council and Local Education Authority*

### Key Priority Aim 6

Northumberland will use information and communication technologies to help culture to flourish

*Key Agency: Northumberland Strategic Partnership*

In each case, the key agency describes the lead organising or coordinating body. It is not intended that they will be solely responsible for implementation.

## 8. Strategic Objectives and Indicative Actions

### Key Priority Aim 1

Northumberland will accelerate its renaissance by ensuring it is an attractive and celebrated place in which to live, work, visit and invest by improving its infrastructure and marketing its strengths to the region and beyond

*Key Agency: Northumberland County Council*

In this area, Northumberland can use its natural assets and its built heritage to attract residents from the region, tourists from outside the region and new investors. Much work is required to realise Northumberland's potential, however, as years of under investment and lack of strategic prioritisation and product development have taken their toll. Stakeholders agreed it was essential to improve the quality of its tourism products generally, including transport infrastructure, accommodation and eating-places.

The Northumberland Strategic Partnership is part of a steering group that is considering a 30-year transport strategy for the A1 corridor. Recommendations include the dualling of the A1 from Newcastle to Alnwick plus local safety schemes where required between Alnwick and Berwick, an improved East Coast Mail Line rail service between Berwick and Newcastle and an integrated bus and rail timetable. The A69, A19, A68 and A696 are also crucially important to Northumberland and require strategic investment too.

These upgrades will be the minimum requirement for Northumberland to effectively attract visitors and lobbying must continue to improve all the county's transport provision. However, more can be done in the county to improve those facilities under local control. This will have a significant impact on residents as well as visitors.

Consultation sessions during the development of the strategy revealed overwhelming support for Northumberland having a more coordinated and focussed approach to its own promotion. Both rural and urban communities felt they would benefit from the creation of a single brand that they could collectively use. Recent research showed that only Hadrian's Wall was specifically named by people from outside the region when they were asked what distinguished Northumberland from other regions, so special consideration needs to be given to that when a tourism brand is established. Evidence to the Northumberland Foot and Mouth Inquiry indicated that direct and indirect losses to the rural economy from the closure of Hadrian's Wall could be as much as £22 million. [Source: Rural Action Plan] Other generic areas for marketing campaigns are the county's heritage and castles, the coastline and the countryside.

One NorthEast is currently working with NTB and other partners to develop a Regional Tourism Cluster, which includes researching the adoption by the region of a single brand. Northumberland will work with them to ensure that the regional brand and the Northumberland sub-brand are developed in tandem.

Regenerating areas through cultural promotion is a well-documented trend and has been tremendously successful for places such as Glasgow and Barcelona. Northumberland is taking a well-trodden path then and has significant assets with which to do this. More than just attracting visitors, a holistic approach to regenerating the county can also have other significant spin offs for residents. Cultural projects can enhance social cohesion by bringing people together. They can promote interest in the local environment and influence how planners and developers think about the county. They can bring about private and public sector partnerships and provide scope for the small business, large entrepreneur and grant-aided organisations to work together. And, crucially for Northumberland, they can provide a different perspective and offer unheard of solutions to regeneration challenges.

Northumberland has a tendency to be inward looking but cultural stakeholders expressed a desire to seek European and international collaborations. Newcastle Gateshead's bid for Capital of Culture with its plan to unify city and country will help this aspiration. Stakeholders also want to work closely with the regional and national centres of excellence like BALTIC and Music Centre Gateshead to facilitate cultural outreach. Northumberland could also benefit from a closer relationship with the Northern Screen Commission and the new Film and Media agency to ensure its natural environment and stunning built heritage continue to attract film and television producers.

In the following action plan, the first partner indicates the responsible organisation. They will not necessarily deliver the action themselves but will coordinate or facilitate delivery by other partners.

## Key Priority Aim 1

The overarching strategic objectives and indicative actions are:

- 1.1 Raise the profile of Northumberland through strategic marketing, branding and media activities
  - a. Create strategic marketing and media plans to attract day and staying visitors and to extend the length of the tourism season  
Responsibility: NCC with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Promote Northumberland as a single destination with a single brand and holiday guide recognising the distinctive role of the Hadrian's Wall brand and the National Park brand  
Responsibility: NCC with local authorities, NNPA and NTB  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Raise the profile of the role, branding and image of Northumberland's Tourist Information Centres and resource and train staff  
Responsibility: Northumbria Tourist Board and local authorities with NNPA  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- 1.2. Work towards upgrading Northumberland's strategic infrastructure
  - a. Identify key sites across the county to act as cultural gateways introducing and interpreting Northumberland's culture and customs for residents and tourists  
Responsibility: NSP with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Upgrade Northumberland's signposting and lay-by facilities  
Responsibility: NCC with local authorities, NNPA, NTB, North Pennines Partnership  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Continue to work with DTLR and partners to upgrade Northumberland's road and rail and bus links  
Responsibility: NSP with local authorities and partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008

- 1.3 Make use of all aspects of Northumberland's unique physical and built environment to develop programmes of cultural events, especially where they can relate to Newcastle Gateshead's Capital of Culture 2008 bid
- a. Develop the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery and Belsay Hall as regional centres of excellence for the presentation of work of internationally based artists  
Responsibility: English Heritage and Northern Arts with local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Support the development of the Kielder Partnership's Art and Architecture programme  
Responsibility: Kielder Partnership  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Initiate a programme of writing in, on, about and for Northumberland's landscapes including the well-known environments of the National Park and North Pennines AONB and the less celebrated South East  
Responsibility: Local arts development agencies with NNPA, North Pennines Partnership, Greening for Growth and schools  
Timescale: 2005-2008
  - d. Secure and promote high profile sports events that promote the natural assets of Northumberland, for example, a triathlon, horse sports, shooting and water based sports  
Responsibility: One NorthEast with Northumberland Sport  
Timescale: 2005-2008
- 1.4 Promote and support Northumberland's flagship attractions: for example Alnwick Garden, Hadrian's Wall, Woodhorn
- a. Work with partners to secure Stage Two Heritage Lottery funding for Experience Northumberland at Woodhorn to deliver a new county resource for both community development and heritage tourism  
Responsibility: NCC and Wansbeck District Council  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Assist in the development of the Alnwick Garden project and ensure links are made between it and with other gardens in the county  
Responsibility: Alnwick Garden project team with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - c. Sustain, enhance and further develop Hadrian's Wall as a key asset for residents, visitors and businesses. Work with the National Trail team and partners and build upon the Single Regeneration Budget funded projects ensuring linkages to benefit the county  
Responsibility: Hadrian's Wall Tourism Partnership  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008

- 1.5 Promote Northumberland's high quality cultural landscapes, including the urban and country parks
  - a. Develop projects to improve parks and open space infrastructure and maintenance using Carlisle Park in Morpeth as an example  
Responsibility: Local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - b. Develop a programme of countryside art to contribute to the regeneration of South East Northumberland and other areas of the county  
Responsibility: Greening for Growth with arts organisations, Northern Arts, MidNAG, local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - c. Develop a visitor attraction by maximising the ecological and recreational potential of the Northumberland coast and plain, especially Druridge Bay  
Responsibility: Northumberland Wildlife Trust with Greening for Growth and partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - d. Support the North Pennines AONB as a visitor destination, and assist with the delivery of sustainable tourism projects  
Responsibility: North Pennines Partnership  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  
- 1.6 Support and promote traditional and contemporary Northumbrian music, language, speech, literature and crafts in a dynamic and developmental way as significant manifestations of what makes Northumberland different from other places
  - a. Record and celebrate Northumberland's heritage of language and literature to create a constantly evolving resource for local communities and tourists  
Responsibility: NCC with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008

1.7 Support the upgrading of Northumberland's cultural attractions and facilities

- a. Promote and develop the Northern Poetry Library  
Responsibility: NCC with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
- b. Support and sustain existing cultural buildings and infrastructures, for example: Queen's Hall, Hexham, Alnwick Playhouse; Berwick Maltings; Phoenix Theatre, Blyth; the library network  
Responsibility: Local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- c. Investigate the issues around the identification, understanding, protection and accessibility of the undiscovered historic cultural assets that could assist Northumberland in defining its future  
Responsibility: English Heritage with voluntary sector, local authorities, NSP and NNPA  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- d. Improve provision of tourist facilities for disabled people and encourage take-up of the Tourist Board's access scheme  
Responsibility: Local authorities with partners  
Timescale: 2005-2008



## Key Priority Aim 2

Northumberland will become more accessible and inclusive by developing needs - led programmes that allow individuals and communities to fully experience, participate in and benefit from cultural activity

*Key Agency: Local Authorities*

Northumberland shares the vision of One NorthEast for its urban and rural communities.

“Communities will be supported to be self-reliant, socially inclusive and sustainable, enterprising and economically prosperous, desirable and safe places and rich in culture, heritage, leisure and sport”.

In Northumberland, partners voiced the feeling that despite some national stereotyping, their culturally distinctive communities were not a homogenous group and that they were diverse in race, gender, age, ability and sexuality. They agreed though, that active involvement with culture was an effective way of empowering communities to do things for themselves and that cultural volunteering projects were a very useful tool in community capacity building that should be developed and encouraged.

In order to achieve this, barriers to access and inclusivity would need to be removed. Specific issues for the county include the physical, social and economic barriers for disabled people and also users of the mental health services, which in the last six months account for 1% of the population. The Disability Discrimination Act, which is increasingly coming into force, and the Human Rights Act provide legal frameworks against which all cultural and educational provision must be benchmarked. These important laws should be seen as a positive challenge for the county, not barriers in themselves, and should become an integral part of the improvement agenda.

Community isolation, which cuts across both rural and urban areas, is a significant barrier to cultural participation. Poor public transport provision and low levels of car ownership exacerbate this. Cultural organisations must be prepared to engage with other partners who are charged with creating solutions to transport and planning problems in the region.

Access to funding is also felt to be a barrier for people in the county. This includes individuals not being able to afford to participate in events and also, widespread condemnation of the complexity of public funding packages. Simpler routes to funding that all cultural organisations and individuals can benefit from must be found.

Poor levels of health generally and the high levels of deprivation and disadvantage, which are determinants of poor health, were also highlighted. Partnerships developed through the Health Action Zone provide an opportunity for a new approach; linking health, regeneration, employment, anti-poverty and other strategies to respond to the needs of identified communities.

Social barriers to culture were also highlighted, for example the lack of family friendly facilities. Successful projects have proven that activities involving parents and children together have had positive effects on families and communities, for example the Sure Start initiative in Bedlington. This has given free equipment and training to encourage physical activity development for children under 4 and their families in a priority area and has led to health benefits and positive lifestyle changes.

## Key Priority Aim 2

The overarching strategic objectives and indicative actions are:

- 2.1 Encourage local communities, especially those living in deprived wards, to participate in more cultural activity
  - a. Build on and link existing projects to develop a county wide family and local history programme  
Responsibility: NCC with NEMLAC  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Facilitate the Northumberland Young Filmmakers Festival to become a permanent feature of Northumberland's cultural life  
Responsibility: MidNAG  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Support the development of Northumberland-based music festivals to be a cultural focus for their community or art form  
Responsibility: Northumberland Music Festivals partnership  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - d. Promote, develop and enhance access to South East Northumberland's countryside and attractions, significantly improving quality of life for local people  
Responsibility: Greening for Growth with Sustrans and partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - e. Increase the number of specialist studios and facilities available to the whole community  
Responsibility: Local authorities with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - f. Make best use of schools' assets, including the use of trained professionals and volunteers to improve access to them by the whole community  
Responsibility: LEA with Northumberland Sport and local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - g. Identify Northumberland's strategic priorities to improve the range of sport and physical activity facilities and opportunities at outdoor recreation grounds and parks and indoor spaces.  
Responsibility: Northumberland Sport with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - h. Develop access to outdoor activities for the benefit of the whole community, maximising Northumberland's assets, for example, cycling and walking routes, water sports, bird watching  
Responsibility: NCC with Northumberland Sport, NNPA, Greening for Growth, Countryside Agency, North Pennines Partnership, Northumberland HAZ/Care Trust  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - i. Develop programmes that use cultural activity to reduce criminal behaviour. Connect sentencing of young people with cultural learning as a means of improving personal skills, especially literacy  
Responsibility: NCC's Youth Offending Team with local authorities and Northumbria Police  
Timescale: 2005-2008

- 2.2 Remove physical and intellectual barriers to cultural projects for participants and audiences
- a. Develop imaginative use of, and improve, community venues and non-traditional spaces to widen access to cultural activities for non-users  
Responsibility: Local authorities with NNPA and partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Increase reader development activities within libraries  
Responsibility: NCC  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Encourage the development of inclusive sport and physical activity, including non-traditional activities, e.g. exercise on referral schemes, by working with schools, clubs, voluntary organisations and communities  
Responsibility: Northumberland Sport  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - d. Increase the number of education officers in heritage institutions to enable the sector to offer more educational resources and services to both school and lifelong learning participants, including visiting schools, colleges and universities  
Responsibility: NEMLAC  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - e. Work with public transport providers to link tourist attractions and community transport services  
Responsibility: NCC Transport team with partners  
Timescale: 2005-2008
- 2.3 Use cultural projects as a way of improving health in the county
- a. Promote physical activity to new markets in the community via GPs, leisure centres, pubs, slimming clubs, walk/cycle to work/school initiatives  
Responsibility: Northumberland Sport with Northumberland HAZ/Care Trust, Greening for Growth and local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Develop arts in health as a means of increasing well-being, improving personal health and reducing inequalities in identified populations in Northumberland  
Responsibility: Northumberland HAZ/Care Trust with secondary and specialist health trusts, local authorities and LADAs  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - c. Improve the links between schools, sports clubs and private/public leisure clubs to improve the continuity of physical activity post school  
Responsibility: Northumberland Sport with schools and LSC  
Timescale: 2005-2008

## Key Priority Aim 3

Northumberland will create the conditions in which new or existing organisations and partnerships can empower communities to improve their confidence and well being

*Key Agency: Northumberland Strategic Partnership*



Culture is optimally supported by responsive and flexible partnerships that can work in a variety of different ways with agencies, communities and individuals.

Northumberland benefits from a network of both mainstream and specifically focussed funding streams that are already contributing substantial amounts of money and resources towards cultural projects. Opportunities are being missed however, to use existing money as leverage for new money, by a lack of strategic overview and countywide development programmes. Projects that would directly benefit local communities could be resourced more easily if there was a proven cultural climate, with research available to everyone for case making and fundraising.

Sharing expertise and actively promoting best practice could also assist Northumberland based organisations. Much experience and data has been gathered by the successful Leader Plus bid teams which could feed into the work been carried out during Market Town Initiative planning phases, for example.

Some local strategic partnerships are also seeing culture as an effective vehicle for improving the lives of communities. Ways have to be found to encourage and feed this. Local authorities and Community Council of Northumberland are already fully active in this area but other agencies and organisations need to become part of this process as LSPs will increasingly become the vehicle for the articulation of the needs of communities.

The relationship between Northumberland's cultural projects and national and regional agencies is also vitally important. Quite often information and expertise can feed directly into an organisation from an external body, for example, Northern Cultural Skills Partnership or Northumbria Tourist Board, which is entirely appropriate. Where resources are concerned however, that regional body will almost certainly contact Northumberland local authorities or local arts development officers, for example, for their feedback, so again good communication and information sharing is crucial.

Regarding the historic environment, English Heritage is keen to work closely with voluntary bodies that are involved in the running of small museums and sites. As the lead body in this area, English Heritage believes that it can only be successful if it works in partnership and in Northumberland this includes the local communities, voluntary organisations, private sector, academic partners and all those with an active stake in the historic environment. Much expertise in the definition, protection and promotion of the county's assets can be shared amongst the partners.

Currently, cultural organisations, which cover a diverse range of bodies from bed and breakfast operators to volunteer-led sports clubs, do not have a channel for communicating across the county. LSPs may provide the answer at a local level, but countywide strategic information sharing is also important to ensure that everyone benefits from resourcing opportunities.

Organisations that are gateways to funding have a responsibility to deliver maximum benefit directly to people and projects. This can be addressed through integrating and interlocking the four main areas of cultural funding:

- NSP and LSP devolved funding and RDA programmes
- European funding
- Private and third sector leverage
- Central Government and public sector leverage including Lottery funding

Effective partnerships need to be in place, then, to maximise resources.

### Key Priority Aim 3

The overarching strategic objectives and indicative actions are

- 3.1 Strengthen or create strong partnerships to allow partners and communities easier access to funding and cultural opportunities
  - a. Establish a partnership and submit a Sport Action Zone bid for South East Northumberland  
Responsibility: Partnership between Blyth Valley/Wansbeck/Castle Morpeth/Sport England/Northumberland HAZ/Care Trust  
Timescale: 2002
  - b. Strengthen the Northumberland Sport partnership in order to increase participation in sport, especially by young people  
Responsibility: Northumberland Sport with NSP  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Develop a countywide arts body which will ensure that a strategic arts overview is realised, cross-cutting programmes are developed and resources, of all kinds, are maximised  
Responsibility: Northern Arts with all LADAs  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - d. Develop the capacity of existing organisations to support and advise small arts companies, artists and community organisations  
Responsibility: Northern Arts with NSP  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - e. Improve operational-level coordination between cultural institutions and local organisations by creating appropriate forums, for example, a county heritage forum that includes tourism partners  
Responsibility: NSP with NEMLAC, National Trust and English Heritage  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - f. Establish a county coordinator to develop heritage education and access provision, in partnership with existing providers of such services including the voluntary sector  
Responsibility: NSP with NEMLAC  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - g. Support the environmental and wider cultural regeneration of South East Northumberland  
Responsibility: Greening for Growth with NSP  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008

- 3.2 Prioritise joint initiatives that facilitate sustainable community development
- a. Develop the links between cultural activities and lifelong learning  
Responsibility: Northumberland Lifelong Learning Partnership  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Develop more partnerships between parks and open space managers, community groups and cultural delivery groups  
Responsibility: Local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Produce guidance for developers to help them maximise their contribution to all aspects of culture  
Responsibility: Local authorities with NCC  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - d. Work with partners to establish regional and local land use planning systems that encourage and facilitate appropriate development that will make rural communities more sustainable  
Responsibility: GO-NE with planning authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - e. Promote the principle of comprehensive cultural benefits being delivered through local planning agreements with developers throughout Northumberland  
Responsibility: Local authority planning group  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - f. Support the National Park Authority and local partners to implement local area action plans that aim to use the cultural environment to develop the local economy and community  
Responsibility: NNPA with local authorities and Community Council of Northumberland  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008

## Key Priority Aim 4

Northumberland will provide an environment in which cultural entrepreneurs can run sustainable businesses

*Key Agency: Business Link for Northumberland*



Northumberland has not been proactive in realising the potential of cultural wealth creation. The time is right, however, to work alongside the emerging creative industry, tourism, digital and multimedia, and food and drink clusters that One NorthEast is developing with partners. Strategic actions contained within the cluster action plans contain valuable guidance and Northumberland is in a strong position to both contribute to the process and benefit from it.

In aligning itself with the ongoing cluster process, Northumberland can ensure that it will reap the benefits of a regional approach and can make a significant impact, certainly on tourism and creative industries. For example, in the region, writing, visual arts (particularly public art) and music have been identified as areas of national and international strength. Northumberland contributes significantly to those areas already, but could do much more to identify businesses working in those fields and support and promote them as assets.

Many agencies and organisations are currently working on realising the potential benefits of the environmental asset and are developing projects and initiatives that cherish and add value to the landscape, wildlife and historic environment. Tranquillity, open space and cleanliness, for example of the county's beaches, all have great value. They are important elements of the quality of life of residents but they also distinguish Northumberland from other places and therefore give the county a competitive edge to attract footloose businesses.

Northumberland's environment is the basis then for many economic activities as well as the more traditionally known farming, forestry and fishing. Artists and craftspeople; tourism related businesses; people involved in sport and physical activity from private gyms to outdoor adventure activities; local food and drink producers; architects working with vernacular buildings and community businesses providing local services are all part of the picture. Valuing the Environment report, published in 2001, reported that over 50,000 jobs in the region depended on a high quality environment with an estimated 27,000 of those being directly dependent on the region's natural and cultural assets. Creative Industries Mapping Document 2001 recognises the importance of the small but active and critically acclaimed film cluster in Tyneside and Northumberland and significant tourism related rural crafts businesses in the county.

The importance of tourism to the Northumberland economy, especially after the Foot and Mouth outbreak, cannot be underestimated and the industries need for specialised support.

Tourism can also help address the issue of the migration of workers from the rural areas. Northumberland people want to see a new entrepreneurial environment in which the resident population and people new to the county could set up cultural businesses as part of a vibrant network. Currently, self-employment is not on the agenda of those wards in Northumberland that suffer from high unemployment. Culture could be a driver for change in this area.

It is important to note in the cultural sector there are vital links between commercial businesses, grant-aided organisations and voluntary groups, as they all underpin each other. To ignore grant aided or voluntary work would negate much of the audiences for the commercial businesses goods and services. Talent and ideas also emerge from voluntary and public sector funded organisations, which can lead to commercial success.

Stakeholders also stressed the need to improve the quality of cultural businesses in the county, especially as many of them in the tourism sector are vital shop windows.

## Key Priority Aim 4

The overarching strategic objectives and indicative actions are:

- 4.1 Work with cultural businesses to enable them to raise their standards of delivery and thereby increase their sustainability and profitability
  - a. Create incentives to encourage tourism businesses to take up the green tourism agenda. Create a consortium to achieve this.  
Responsibility: Countryside Agency and NNPA  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Encourage existing initiatives such as Made in Northumberland, Eurocrafts, Northumbrian Larder, Hadrian Means Business, for example, to strengthen the cultural business sector  
Responsibility: Businesses with existing initiatives and partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Improve specialist tourism advice available to businesses and improve the links that businesses have with Tourist Information Centres  
Responsibility: Business Link for Northumberland with local authorities, NTB and NNPA  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  
- 4.2. Work with partners to develop a range of cultural business development interventions that maximise the potential for culture to create new jobs
  - a. Introduce tourism cluster training for businesses, for example farm tourism, crafts,  
Responsibility: Business Link for Northumberland  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Work with existing initiatives to develop the links between tourism operators and local produce and farm shop programmes  
Responsibility: Business Link for Northumberland with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Work with One NorthEast to identify those businesses that could benefit from working within a cluster  
Responsibility: NSP with Business Link for Northumberland  
Timescale: 2002 - 2004
  - d. Develop projects to utilise and celebrate the added value of Northumberland's environment to the benefit of production based businesses such as farming and forestry  
Responsibility: NNPA  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008

- e. Encourage the development of sports related businesses to provide sports activities in tourism related industries (eg bike hire), education and public and private leisure centres.  
Responsibility: Business Link for Northumberland  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - f. Develop a pilot scheme that enables artists working in residencies to have paid time to create their own work  
Responsibility: Northern Arts  
Timescale: 2005-2008
- 4.3 Undertake research into the economic impact of cultural and tourism activity to Northumberland
- a. Contribute to the collection and analysis of data pertaining to rural industries and crafts, environment, tourism and cultural businesses  
Responsibility: LSC with Northumberland Information Network and Business Link for Northumberland  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Investigate the barriers to a successful cultural economy, for example, good quality affordable housing, childcare and workspace available to artists  
Responsibility: Culture North East  
Timescale: 2005-2008

## Key Priority Aim 5

Northumberland will build an adaptable and highly skilled workforce by raising participation and attainment through high quality cultural education and training

*Key Agency: Learning + Skills Council with Local Education Authority*



At the heart of Northumberland's ability to regenerate itself is its human potential. The creation of wealthy, cohesive communities, which is ultimately the county's quality of life, depends largely then on the resident population and their ability to be imaginative, confident and outward looking and empowered to fulfil their potential. The people of the county need to take their inspiration from the contemporary and from the rest of the world as well as from their traditional past and in this, cultural projects have a major role to play.

Northumberland recognises that, along with the rest of the region, it needs to improve the skills base of the population, including basic skills. Recent research has demonstrated that about 25% of the adult community in the region have basic skills needs, with many of those people living in rural areas where access to appropriate learning can be a problem. Cultural projects need to be initiated that can develop self-confidence at all ages and help people into work.

Northumberland's formal educational attainment is about at the national average but certain parts of the county are below average. The aim then is to create a climate for young people to develop and grow their own culture in order to create a vibrant county in which they will want to stay.

The cultural sector needs to work closely with the LEA to ensure that projects and practices can be effectively woven into the curriculum to offer Northumberland's young people the best opportunities.

Lifelong learning is also at the heart of Northumberland's future plans and here the library network, archives, heritage venues and arts centres play a very important role. The Northumberland LSC as part of its strategic approach to developing lifelong learning across the county will be working to increase the levels of skills available throughout the cultural sector with organisations such as Education Business Links and the Learning Partnership.

## Key Priority Aim 5

The overarching strategic objectives and indicative actions are:

- 5.1 Prioritise Northumberland's unique culture as a way of empowering people, especially young people, by creating strong links between the cultural sector and learning networks
  - a. Facilitate young people's access to cultural activity, eg equipment, instruments, teaching and rehearsal space  
Responsibility: LEA with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Create a young inventors education/apprenticeship programme based at heritage venues for example Woodhorn, Cragside, Berwick Ramparts  
Responsibility: NEMLAC with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Use cultural projects in Sure Start and Green Start programmes for the under 5s as a key to unlocking potential to learn  
Responsibility: Sure Start boards/Green Start Coordinator with Greening for Growth, Countryside Agency, LSC  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
  - d. Continue the delivery of Active Sports, Active Schools and Active Communities Programmes as a vehicle for improving skills  
Responsibility: Northumberland Sport with Northumberland HAZ/Care Trust  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- 5.2 Develop a range of business skills interventions, particularly in economically important areas like tourism
  - a. Invest in the resourcing and training of Northumberland's Tourist Information Centre staff and tourism operators to enable them to promote the county as effectively as possible  
Responsibility: NTB with local authorities and NNPA  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Assist with the development of InterACT, the region's theatre training ensemble including developing the studio facility at Alnwick Playhouse  
Responsibility: NTC with Northern Arts  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Develop a traditional countryside and environmental skills base by developing sector skills action plans and implementing new training schemes, in partnership with others already operating in this field  
Responsibility: LSC and Business Link for Northumberland with partners  
Timescale: 2002-2004

- d. Assist tourism professionals with training for dealing with disabled customers following Disability Discrimination Act guidance  
Responsibility: Business Link for Northumberland and LSC  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- e. Promote and run specialist training, such as Welcome Host for tourism businesses and whole communities, towns and villages  
Responsibility: NTB with local authorities  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- f. Investigate the training needs of the staff in heritage institutions and invest in appropriately tailored packages  
Responsibility: NEMLAC  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008
- g. Assist in the development of Park Houses near to and around the National Park. The Park Houses will be enhanced rural tourist information centres that cater for business and community needs as well as those of the visitor  
Responsibility: NNPA with NTB and local authorities  
Timescale: 2005-2008

5.3 Use cultural projects and training as a way of building confidence and tackling low entrepreneurship amongst communities

- a. Develop a "Pied Piper programme". Grant aid talented cultural amateurs in Northumberland to develop ideas and projects across any art form and with any community  
Responsibility: Northern Arts  
Timescale: 2002-2004
- b. Facilitate the voluntary sector to play a leading role in lifelong learning for the benefit of users, especially for those people whose creativity and skills are expressed primarily through the arts  
Responsibility: LSC with Community Council of Northumberland, Blyth and Wansbeck CVS with arts organisations  
Timescale: 2002-2004
- c. Prepare, resource and implement an action plan for the training of professional and volunteer leaders, coaches and officials with particular emphasis on training for 16+ people to use sport as a route into community development and/or employment  
Responsibility: LSC with Northumberland Sport and One NorthEast  
Timescale: 2002-2004 and 2005-2008



## Key Priority Aim 6

Northumberland will use information and communication technologies to help culture to flourish

*Key Agency: Northumberland Strategic Partnership*

Cultural stakeholders identified five key strands for ICT that would allow it to underpin all the aspirations identified in the strategy.

- Improve Northumberland's access to networks and markets
- Improve the interpretation of cultural assets
- Key tool for skills development
- As an artform in itself
- Develop websites to broaden access to cultural information

The Rural Action Plan identifies ICT as offering opportunities for communities and businesses to overcome their remoteness from urban centres and markets. In Northumberland, this is also true in the urban settlements. Firstly though, basic issues need to be addressed such as the development of appropriate infrastructure and access points and upskilling the population so they are capable of benefiting from the opportunities. Usefully, cultural projects can provide a platform for ICT skills development that has a much wider community impact.

Research and development is already underway for improving interpretation of the county's assets including establishing a new county records office at Woodhorn, but there is great potential in this area to use existing assets in a new and exciting way.

## Key Priority Aim 6

The overarching strategic objectives and indicative actions are:

- 6.1 Develop a well-coordinated approach to ICT that will benefit cultural practitioners, local people and tourists
  - a. Improve access to ICT for tourism business and improve awareness of existing ICT and information services. Aim to become the first county to link all tourism business using ICT  
Responsibility: NSP with NTB  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - b. Develop the contribution that libraries, community buildings, TICs, ICT kiosks, call centres and other information-giving organisations make to culture  
Responsibility: NSP with local authorities, NEMLAC, Community Council of Northumberland  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - c. Develop Northumberland's role in digital arts  
Responsibility: Northern Arts with Isis Arts and Queen's Hall Arts  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - d. Assist in the development of an e-learning strategy for Northumberland that includes the important contribution that the cultural sector makes to learning and workforce development  
Responsibility: LSC  
Timescale: 2002-2004
  - e. Investigate the opportunity for a Centre for the Arts in Rural Areas, to act as a virtual and physical networking and coordination body for practitioners  
Responsibility: NSP with Countryside Agency, DEFR  
Timescale: 2005-2008
  - f. Develop Woodhorn as a centre of excellence for the creation, preservation and exploitation of digital heritage resources.  
Responsibility: NCC and Wansbeck District Council  
Timescale: 2005-2008

## 9. Delivery and Monitoring

Culture in Northumberland is delivered by a vast array of organisations and individuals who are all contributing resources from different funding streams. In order to achieve the aims of the strategy, additional funding will need to be identified. In some cases this will be mainstream treasury funding used in a more strategic way, for example used to lever money in from other sources. Sometimes though, new funding will have to be bid for from competitive schemes. This will be best achieved if priorities are agreed amongst countywide partners and sound and relevant data is available for case making.

The Northumberland Strategic Partnership is in a period of change and this presents opportunities for culture to be placed at the heart of its new plans. As more funding is devolved to the sub-region, the role of the NSP as a strategic coordinating body becomes even more vital. To this end, proposals have been submitted to:

1. Establish an NSP cultural steering group or sector board
2. Establish a coordinating cultural unit within the NSP that would
  - Coordinate the sector board consisting of stakeholder organisations responsible for delivering cultural activity
  - Facilitate communication and partnership development
  - Measure the progress of the strategy against agreed indicators and ensure accountability to whichever body will sit in a scrutiny role
  - Assist in the resourcing of large scale projects that would benefit the whole county and the region
3. Local authorities to prepare local cultural action plans

The steering group or sector board would consist of representatives from sport, tourism, the arts, the environment and heritage and cross cutting agencies such as Learning + Skills Council, Business Link for Northumberland and health organisations. It would also have representatives from local authorities and local strategic partnerships. This is a legacy of the development process of the strategy and has proved to be an extremely effective way of working in Northumberland.

Through the NSP, cultural organisations will also have an interface with One NorthEast particularly as part of their cluster development process, and with other regional and national bodies.

Another vital area for the successful rollout of the NSP's cultural strategy is that communities are able to benefit from the process. This could take many forms and certainly the strategy is not intended to be prescriptive about how people engage with culture. It will have succeeded however, if communities feel that their creative and economic aspirations are realised through the successful exploitation of cultural projects.

Throughout the process, partners have been consulted about the role that they would like to play. In some cases, organisations or agencies have stated an interest in managing a particular project or initiative. The NSP will continue to work with these and other interested parties to ensure that the ideas contained within the document are delivered.

As a result of this strategy, local action plans can be drawn up that will identify how the district councils, local strategic partnerships and communities can use culture to meet their own needs.

**Cluster**

A network of production of strongly interdependent firms (including specialised suppliers), knowledge producing agents (universities, research institutes, engineering companies), bridging institutions (brokers, consultants) and customers, linked to each other in a value adding production chain. (OECD, 1999)

**Experience Northumberland at Woodhorn**

A joint initiative between NCC and Wansbeck District Council to restore the existing buildings at Woodhorn Colliery Museum and create a new tourist attraction highlighting Northumberland's unique coalmining culture. It will also feature a new home for the county records and archives.

**Green Start**

A national Countryside Agency pilot project for Green Play (working as part of the Greening for Growth team)

**InterACT**

The Northern Region's Theatre Training Ensemble. Managed by NTC Touring Theatre Company from their offices in the Playhouse Theatre, Alnwick

**Non-traditional sports and physical activities**

Things like street sports, eg skateboarding or exercise on referral schemes through GPs

**Northumberland Sport**

A consortium of partners that include local authorities, sporting bodies, the education sector and the Health Action Zone. It's mission is to increase participation in sport in the county especially by young people and to encourage and enable individuals to reach their potential. It has 3 programmes, described below:

**Active Communities**

A "framework" comprising services, products and sources of funding provided by Sport England, often in partnership, to assist individuals and organisations to create their own Active Communities

**Active Schools**

Demonstrate Sport England's commitment to encouraging every child to stay physically active for life. It highlights the importance of physical activity as an essential part of a healthy, active lifestyle

**Active Sports**

Active Sports is a five-year developmental programme targeting ten sports. It builds on current good practice and helps young people to get more from their involvement in sport

**"Pied Piper" programme**

Supporting talented individuals who have the ability to generate innovative and distinctive projects which raise the profile of their artform or community of interest

**Practitioner**

A worker or volunteer who has mastery of a cultural skill

#### Sports Action Zone

A 5 year programme to benefit some of England's most deprived wards using sport and physical activity to regenerate communities

#### Sure Start

A government initiative, targeted at parents and children, which promotes the physical, intellectual and social development of pre-school children, particularly those who are disadvantaged, to ensure they are ready to thrive when they get to school

#### Welcome Host

A training course for the tourism industry aimed at improving the standard of customer service and the welcome provided to visitors

## Organisations

#### CVS

Council for Voluntary Service

#### DCMS

Department for Culture Media and Sport

#### DTLR

Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions

#### English Heritage

The lead body for the protection, enhancement and public enjoyment of the historic environment. Joined with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

#### Greening for Growth

A comprehensive partnership (of the public, private and voluntary sectors) to deliver the environmental regeneration of South East Northumberland

#### GO-NE

Government Office for the North East

#### HAZ

Northumberland Health Action Zone was established to improve health in the county, narrow health inequalities and create new models of service delivery. It is underpinned by strong partnerships across health, social care, local authority, voluntary organisations and the business community

Organisations cont.

LADAs

Local Arts Development Agencies

LEA

Local Education Authority

Local authorities in Northumberland

Alnwick District Council, Berwick-Upon-Tweed Borough Council, Blyth Valley Borough Council, Castle Morpeth Borough Council, Wansbeck District Council, Tynedale Council. Northumberland County Council is also a Local Authority but is usually referred to as NCC.

LSC

Learning + Skills Council

LSPs

Local Strategic Partnerships

MidNAG

Mid Northumberland Arts Group

NCC

Northumberland County Council

NCCHF

Northumberland Coalfield Communities Heritage Forum

NEMLAC

North East Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

NNPA

Northumberland National Park Authority

Northern Arts

The Regional Arts Board for the North East

Northumberland Care Trust

A new organisation that provides health and social care to people in their local communities. It is also responsible for ensuring that other services (including hospital care, specialist care and home care) are provided by other organisations

NPP

North Pennines (AONB) Partnership

NSP

Northumberland Strategic Partnership

RDA

Regional Development Agency, One NorthEast

Sustrans

The sustainable transport charity. Working on practical projects, they encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport to reduce motor traffic and its adverse effects.

Nicholas Baumfield  
Mid-Northumberland Arts Group

Guy Beauchamp  
Castle Morpeth Borough Council

Jane Blackburn Project Manager  
Joined Up North

Dave Bonser  
Northumberland County Council

Shirley Campbell  
Northern Arts

Jon Clark  
Greening for Growth

Ray Duffell  
Northumberland Care Trust

Stuart Evans  
Northumberland National Park Authority

Neville Hall  
Business Link for Northumberland

Stacy Hall  
Northumberland County Council

Geoff Hughes  
Sport England

Jo Laverick  
Berwick-Upon-Tweed Borough Council

Tom McMurtrie  
Alnwick District Council

Andrew Miller  
Northumberland National Park Authority

Colin Mitchell Chair  
Wansbeck District Council

Garry Owens  
Blyth Valley Borough Council

Peter Rutherford  
Berwick-Upon-Tweed Borough Council

David Turnbull  
Learning + Skills Council

Lynn Turner  
Tynedale Council

Alan Wann  
Northumberland County Council

Penny Wilkinson  
North East Museums, Libraries and Archives

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## Featured Photographs

### Front Cover

Wansbeck Colliery Museum; Harry Potter - photograph courtesy of Warner Bros 2001; Hadrians Wall; Wansbeck Festival banner project with artists Paul Moss and Cath Campbell, photograph by Sarah Hudson; PSI by Inflate - Sittooteries at English Heritage's Belsay Hall, photograph by Judith King.

### Back Cover

The Long Tide - MidNAG project with artists Tim Rubidge, Tanya Axford and Druridge Bay Middle School, photograph by Margaret Eagle-Clark; Northumberland Cross at sunset; James Turrell's Skyspace at Kielder Water, photograph by Mark Pinder; Charlie Dimmock joining Alnwick Garden's Friends Scheme.

### Inside

Photographs include: Walking in the Northumberland National Park; Chantry Crafts in Morpeth; The Morpeth Gathering, photograph by Linda Kay; Gateshead Millennium Bridge, photograph courtesy of Newcastle Gateshead Initiative; Newbiggin Peoples House Arts Group, photograph by Sarah Hudson; Golf at Maften Hall, photograph by Graeme Peacock; pupils at King Edward VI School Morpeth.



If you would like to become more involved, or for further information please contact

Northumberland Strategic Partnership  
9/10 Telford Court  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 2DB  
Tel: 01670 500630 email: [enquiries@nsp.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nsp.org.uk)  
[www.nsp.org.uk](http://www.nsp.org.uk)  
or  
Your local council leisure services department