

**LIFE IS FOR LIVING
TWO**



**A REFRESHED
CULTURAL
STRATEGY FOR THE
BOROUGH OF
BRACKNELL
FOREST**

2008/2012

**A DRAFT PAPER
FOR CONSULTATION
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**Full report available at
www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/culturalstrategy**

Why are we consulting with you?

For the past five years the Council has had in place a strategy called 'Life is for Living'. This is the strategy for cultural services in Bracknell Forest and is a strategy for the area, not solely for the services provided by Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

We are now starting to develop a new strategy for the next five years – 2008-2012, Life is for Living Two. Our original strategy has achieved many of its objectives but now needs updating.

To inform the development of the new strategy for the next five years we are consulting with you. We would like your feedback as to whether the objectives we are suggesting are the right ones, and the actions that you think we should take to achieve these objectives. Full copies of the report are available on www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/culturalstrategy

The consultation period will end on 8th February 2008.

What is Culture?

Culture in Bracknell Forest is the combination of pursuits, beliefs and knowledge which defines who we are and what we do.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport lists cultural activities as:

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

Life is for Living Two includes all of these.

Cultural Strategy Vision

To improve the look and feel of Bracknell Forest making it a stimulating and enjoyable place to visit, and contributing to a thriving community where all people are happy to live, work and achieve.

To support this vision we are suggesting three strategic themes:-

- Enhance Town Centre, villages and neighbourhoods
- Improving the sense of belonging and community spirit for all
- Continue to support and improve the range of high quality facilities and services

CULTURAL STRATEGY ACTION PLAN
MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

Potential actions in Bracknell Forest

What will be done

Working together

- Continue the Cultural Partnership
- Promote cultural advocacy, leadership and capacity building
- Ensure that culture is embedded within the Local Strategic Partnership and in Corporate Plans
- Liaise with regional agencies to ensure joined up agendas
- Support Parish and Town Councils with implementation of their plans
- Encourage cross boundary working with neighbouring authorities
- Support local clubs and societies in achieving their ambitions
- Provide additional support and training for the voluntary sector
- Improve links with local businesses
- Work with the commercial leisure sector to provide complementary facilities
- Develop effective partnerships with other key stakeholders
- Encourage networks that promote best practice and innovation

Funding and Resources

- Work with local internal and external partners to maximise the opportunities for external funding created by partnership working
- Keep under review availability of Lottery funds and make bids as appropriate
- Ensure that developers fund the costs associated with providing good cultural infrastructure for new residents
- Work with the private sector to increase investment in the area
- Provide opportunities for local businesses to meet their Corporate Social Responsibility agendas
- Maximise the opportunities created by Local Area Agreements
- Maximise the opportunities created by Multi Area Agreements
- Optimise contribution by the voluntary sector
- Ensure value for money is achieved by effective partnership working and ongoing modernization initiatives
- Explore feasibility options for the management of local leisure centres

Monitoring Progress

- Create regular cultural progress reports
- Seek to improve the Culture CPA assessment
- Undertake effective research on participation/non participation

THEME 1
ENHANCE TOWN CENTRE, VILLAGES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

Potential Actions in Bracknell Forest

What will be done

Throughout the Borough we will seek to:

- Improve security and reduce fear of crime
- Provide appropriate facilities and activities for young people
- Providing purposeful leisure opportunities as diversionary activities
- Encourage residents to care for their local environment
- Increase participation in and enjoyment of art, sport and recreation
- Ensure town centres are fully accessible for all
- Encourage high standards of architecture and design
- Promote understanding and appreciation of new town architecture
- Start Blue Plaque Scheme for buildings of historic interest
- Participate in Architecture Week
- Continue the Design Award scheme
- Link in with Crowthorne Initiatives that unite Crowthorne as a village
- Implement public art strategy in villages and neighbourhoods
- Ensure new neighbourhoods have appropriate cultural provision
- Encourage best practice in street design
- Promote a sense of place in all new developments through good urban design
- Encourage best practice in conservation management of archaeological sites
- Safeguard and enhance the natural environment
- Create new Conservation Areas

In Bracknell Town Centre we will seek to:

- Establish a new library and cultural facility in Bracknell Town Centre
- Create a new Jubilee Gardens
- Be proactive with the implementation of the Public Art Strategy
- Encourage provision of quality cinema and other leisure facilities
- Continue to promote customer care in shops
- Continue to promote disability awareness training in shops/other venues
- Encourage a coherent and improved range of events, markets and street entertainment
- Encourage provision of more cafés, restaurants and shops
- Seek to ensure continuation of artists studio facilities
- Improve Bracknell Railway Station
- Improve transport to and from the town centre
- Create a heritage trail into the town centre
- Improve 'Gateways' to the town/first impressions

THEME 2

IMPROVING THE SENSE OF BELONGING AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT FOR ALL

Potential Actions in Bracknell Forest

What will be done

Encouraging participation and enjoyment

- Improve community cohesion through culture and sport (LAA)
- Improve the health and wellbeing of adult residents (LAA)
- Improve health and wellbeing in the community and in the workplace
- Increase the range of opportunities available through outreach work and community development
- Encourage schools to take part in the Creative Partnership initiative
- Support schools with increasing the cultural content of after school and holiday activities
- Work with schools to promote and encourage community use of schools
- Develop the cultural elements of the Adult Learning Programme and increase participation
- Appoint new part time sports development officer to work with community/voluntary groups
- Seek to encourage participation and then develop links to clubs
- Encourage the development of creative industries as local small businesses
- Encourage social enterprises with a cultural theme
- Implement the Play Strategy
- Seek to provide rehearsal space for musicians
- Write a Community Arts Development Plan
- Encourage sustainable food production and consumption by local residents
- Support 'grow your own' initiatives and allotments
- Establish woodland crafts and forest heritage project to enhance local identity and skills
- Encourage the voluntary sector to increase quality and range of activities
- Increase community involvement in parks by establishing liaison and Friends of Groups
- Seek to provide community development in new neighbourhoods

Reducing Barriers to Access

- Utilise the e+ Smartcard to encourage access for low income groups
- Remove physical barriers that prevent access by those with physical disabilities
- Seek to ensure that all section of the community enjoy equal opportunities for accessing cultural services
- Seek to make available employment opportunities in the cultural sector for those with learning difficulties
- Seek to provide facilities close to where people live
- Provide more community arts activities in local community venues
- Review public transport needs and requirements
- Work with transport providers to devise innovative schemes to improve access to cultural facilities

Celebrating

- Encourage civic pride and civic participation in the local area
- Encourage community groups to celebrate local historic events
- Celebrate diversity and internationalism
- Support nationally significant initiatives such as Heritage Open Days and China 2008
- Celebrate achievement with awards schemes such as Youth Arts Awards, Sportsmark
- Encourage other celebratory events

Improving information and awareness

- Continue to improve cultural content of Borough web pages
- Continue to improve the young people's website
- Publish a Good Neighbour Guide
- Improve information in the Visitor Welcome Pack
- Promote sense of place through raising awareness of local parks, countryside and heritage resources
- Promote awareness and care of the Borough's splendid tree stock and landscape character
- Continue digitization of historic and other records
- Create a Borough wide arts and heritage trail
- Keep under review the need to provide information in foreign languages, particularly in libraries

THEME 3
**CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AND IMPROVE THE RANGE OF HIGH QUALITY
FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

Potential Actions in Bracknell Forest

What will be done

Improving infrastructure

- Maintain investment in cultural infrastructure to meet aspirations of the community
- Improve energy efficiency of buildings used for cultural activity
- Progress plans to restore the historic landscape at South Hill Park
- Ensure maintenance plan for Lily Hill Park is implemented
- Implement the Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Continually improve green spaces using the 'plus one' principle
- Maximise cultural opportunities created by Building Schools for the Future
- Support the redevelopment of Bracknell and Wokingham College
- Establish a regional standard trampolining centre
- Build a new community centre at Jennett's Park
- Ensure maintenance of public art
- Support the Berkshire Record Office as an archive for historic records
- Explore feasibility of increasing archive storage facilities
- Improve non car access to sites by improving facilities for walking and cycling

Encouraging use

- Support South Hill Park as a local and regional arts venue
- Maximise opportunities for inspiring cultural activity created by the 2012 Olympics
- Support appropriate local sports clubs to achieve improvements in their facilities and services
- Encourage sports development through community and voluntary groups
- Increase levels of physical activity (LAA)
- Maximise benefits from the extended services agenda
- Support schools striving for specialist status in cultural area
- Increase use of libraries
- Promote learning through cultural activity
- Encourage use of parks and community centres by older people
- Improve access for disabled people to all buildings and to green spaces
- Encourage countryside recreation on low impact sites so as to meet the needs of the SPA Mitigation Strategy
- Ensure Access and Education Plan for Lily Hill Park is implemented
- Continue to support the voluntary footpath warden scheme and local conservation volunteers
- Improve consultation and community engagement in shaping the future of services
- Promote good practice through cultural accreditation schemes e.g. Chartermark, Green Flag
