

Resources, Fire & Rescue Overview & Scrutiny Committee

18 December 2019

Update on Heritage and Culture Service Performance

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report gives Members an overview of the performance of the Heritage and Culture Service following a service restructure, delivery of the One Organisation Plan savings targets and the move to the Resources Directorate.

2. Background

- 2.1 Heritage & Culture Warwickshire (HCW) acts as professional lead to safeguard Warwickshire's archives, natural history and natural sciences, protect its historic and natural environment and provide high quality heritage and cultural engagement opportunities for everyone in the County and beyond. The service cares for, and develops, the two County heritage collections - Museum and Archives - to ensure these irreplaceable heritage assets are preserved for generations to come.

HCW are responsible for five sites – Market Hall Museum, St Johns House, Warwickshire County Record Office, Museum Collection stores (currently based at Montague Road) and Chesterton Windmill. HCW also curate and care for the collection at the Roman Alcester Museum. The Warwickshire County Museum collection contains over 800,000 individual objects and is the oldest local authority museum collection in the UK. The Warwickshire County Record Office contains the Warwickshire archives dating back to the 12th century (a more detailed profile of HCW service areas and case studies is provided in Appendix 2).

- 2.2 In the period 2011 – 2018 the Heritage and Culture Service was required to reduce annual costs by more than 60% as part of the wider Warwickshire County Council (WCC) One Organisation Plan savings.

During that same period, a number of Heritage & Culture Warwickshire's (HCW) service areas were moved to other service areas within WCC including: Historic Environment Record, Planning Archaeology, Tourism, Ecology and Archaeology Warwickshire.

At the same time, the service was experiencing an increased demand for professional advice services due to loss of specialist heritage and arts staff at District and Borough level, and through staffing reductions at Arts Council England and the loss of the MLA (Museums, Libraries, Archives West Midlands).

This unprecedented reduction in resource prompted HCW to make a thorough assessment of their existing services, resulting in the prioritisation of four aspects of service provision:

- Management and care of Warwickshire's collections (Archive and Museum)
- Provision of public access through the County Museum and County Archive, in line with minimum requirements to meet Arts Council England and The National Archives Accreditation
- Development of outreach and public engagement programme
- Development of new income streams and optimising commercial opportunities within the Service

HCW was successful in securing external funding from Arts Council England to support the process of business transformation, resulting in significant organisational change:

- Staffing restructure to ensure breadth of professional expertise was retained whilst maximising opportunities for shared working across HCW and other WCC service areas
- Reductions in management staff (from 5 FTE to 1.6 FTE), prioritising capacity within customer facing roles
- Closure of public opening at St Johns House, prioritising pre-booked educational and other group visits on site
- A successful redevelopment of Market Hall Museum following over £1m of investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The refurbished museum was designed to increase public access to the collections, provide space to further develop HCW's education and outreach offer, and generate regular income through the provision of a new shop and café
- Investment in the digitisation of collections and archives, providing greater remote access to our services for customers
- Growing our volunteer team (including remote volunteering), supporting service development and ensuring our high quality visitor experience is maintained
- Working proactively to develop new partnerships to facilitate shared approaches to meeting WCC priorities (e.g. health and wellbeing)

The progress that has been made to date is in part due to a more business-like approach to service delivery and income generation, and to the commitment and hard work of HCW staff at every level.

The service continues to reshape and realign the heritage and culture service offer for the County, responding to county council priorities, changes in information governance, opportunities within the sector e.g. Coventry City of Culture 2021, and the changing needs of heritage customers and participants.

3. Heritage and Culture Service Performance

- 3.1 HCW operates from 3 main sites in Warwick town centre – Market Hall Museum, Warwickshire County Record Office and St Johns House. The service also offers outreach and engagement activity across the County (including sites such as Kingsbury Water Park, Cross Hands Quarry, Roman Alcester, Chesterton Windmill) and delivers over 55 outreach sessions in schools each year.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of on-site visitors	42,017	91,378	89,527
Number of page views of HCW online resources	2,194,414	3,576,905	4,049,454
Number of volunteer hours	8,005	8,536	10,153
Number of new collections acquired for Warwickshire	119	235	112
Number of children attending a school event	6,165	5,853	4,852
Number of followers on social media	11,366	11,864	14,421
Number of people attending a community event	11,666	8,334	9,502
Number of digital images created	n/a	n/a	69,851

The increase in the number of on-site visitors reflects the re-opening of the refurbished Market Hall Museum. These figures have been sustained, with only a slight drop off in the year following re-opening. Some of the biggest increases have been in digital engagement, with an ongoing rise in the use of online resources and social media.

(See Appendix 1 – HCW Service infographic 2018-19)

3.2 Physical Visits

The number of physical visits to HCW sites is broadly reflective of national trends for both Museum and Archive services. The number of physical visits to the Warwickshire County Record Office (WCRO) has been steadily reducing over the past 3-5 years as general visitors (e.g. for family history) access information in digital format (through the WCC website or commercial sites such as Ancestry or Find my Past).

Numbers have plateaued over the past 2 years (at around 3,000 per year) and visitors often consist of specialist researchers and academics, as well as those requiring on-site access to confidential or sensitive material.

Visits to Market Hall Museum grew significantly following refurbishment (from 30,000 pa to over 75,000 pa), and these visitor numbers have now steadied at around 78,000 pa.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of on-site visitors	42,017	91,378	89,527

3.3 Learning and Community Engagement

HCW has a well-established Heritage Education service offering curriculum linked programmes (either on-site or outreach) to KS1 and KS2. Alongside the formal learning offer, the Learning and Community Engagement team (LaCE) develop and deliver an annual programme of events, workshops and participatory activities for children, young people, families, adults and older people. This team lead the work for HCW in terms of meeting broader WCC priorities, supporting breadth of access to heritage and culture and Warwickshire's collections and developing a range of externally funded projects and programmes to meet the needs of Warwickshire's diverse communities e.g. *Dementia Café*, *Relaxed opening* – early evening opening at Market Hall Museum with a focus on creating space for neurodiverse individuals and their families.

Performance data for this area is showing a steady reduction in take up of on-site education visits. This reflects national trends as school budgets have come under pressure and the cost of coach travel has increased, at the same time as changes in subject area focus within the national curriculum. Over the same period Heritage Education have seen an increase in bookings for outreach activity (within schools).

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of children attending a school event	6,165	5,853	3,364
Number of people attending a community event	11,666	8,334	9,502

3.4 Digital engagement and preservation

The growth of digital engagement, particularly in relation to archival material, has been driven primarily by the growth of external websites such as *Ancestry* and *Find my Past*, which is available free of charge at the WCRO and through Warwickshire Libraries. Much of the traditional family history audience now access information in this way, and there is an ongoing appetite for newly digitised material. The WCRO website pages achieve the highest number of all county council website hits, a figure which has remained static for the past few years. In 2017, to coincide with the re-launch of Market Hall Museum, HCW launched the *Our Warwickshire* community history website – which now achieves just under 900,000 page views per year.

HCW are currently delivering the Warwickshire Bytes digital heritage project (due to complete in March 2020). The project has included the digitisation of court transcriptions and WW1 records, and has included the successful pilot of remote digital volunteering – supported by a campaign from the BBC's *Who Do You Think You Are* magazine.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of page views of HCW online resources	2,194,414	3,576,905	4,049,454
Number of digital images created	n/a	n/a	69,851

3.5 Acquisitions

The number of acquisitions (museum and archive) is dependent upon a number of factors, including the amount of infrastructure development happening in the county (and subsequent archaeological finds) and the rate of objects/archives being offered to the service from members of the public. In line with national trends (which have seen a significant decrease in numbers

of professional curating and archival staff in the sector following public spending reductions) the quantity of active collecting has remained static or reduced.

The county council's Museum and Archive Collection and Development Policies have recently been reviewed by external subject matter specialists and will be considered by Cabinet in January 2020.

Whilst new acquisitions are not a current priority for the service, when an opportunity for Warwickshire to acquire an object or archive with significance to the county is presented – as was the case with the recent South Warwick Roman Coin Hoard – HCW will work hard to ensure enough external funds are raised for the purchase, and to secure the acquisition for Warwickshire.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Number of new collections acquired for Warwickshire	119	235	112

4. Development Opportunities

4.1 HCW are currently working towards a number of development priorities for the period 2020 - 2025.

4.2 Warwickshire Heritage & Culture Strategy

Evidence of the wider benefits to society of heritage and culture*, the contribution heritage and culture make to the local economy and the need to work collaboratively to maximise reducing resources has prompted the need for a strategic approach to the development of heritage and culture in Warwickshire. Work is now underway, led by HCW along with county council partners (Tourism, Community and Voluntary Sector Partnerships, Economic Development and Regeneration, Country Parks, Libraries) and working with external stakeholders (including Districts and Boroughs) to create an ambitious 5-year Heritage & Culture Strategy for Warwickshire. The draft Strategy was formally approved by Cabinet in November. The next stage of work will involve working with partners across the county to develop an ambitious action plan.

* The Museum Association's Museums Taskforce Report and Recommendations, 2018 states:

"Museums can help to make people's lives better

- *Museums enhance health and wellbeing.*
- *Museums are inclusive organisations that often work with vulnerable and*

marginalised communities.

- *Museums contribute to life-long learning and inspire self-expression and creativity, helping to develop valuable, transferable skills.*
- *Museums entertain and inspire audiences, bringing communities together and informing individual and collective identity.*
- *Museums help to create a sense of belonging by working with communities and encouraging active public participation.*
- *Museums help to revitalise local economies, creating jobs and offering a wide range of employment, training and work-experience opportunities.*
- *Museums are integral to place-making and help to create better places for us all to live and work.*

Museums perform many roles in society, but what makes them different is that they work with the public to explore and share compelling stories about real objects and collections in unique settings.”¹

4.3 New Collections Centre for the Warwickshire Museum Collection

The Warwickshire Museum Collection is due to be moved from Montague Road to Hawkes Point by March 2020. The move is a significant logistical challenge for the service - with over 800,000 individual objects to pack and move. Whilst the square meterage being provided for storage at Hawkes Point is currently less than currently exists at Montague Road (which may generate long term storage issues as the collection grows, particularly with the likely addition of significant archaeological archive material generated by HS2), the Museum team are keen to capitalise on the new, purpose built storage facility by exploring new ways to offer tours, study visits and schools programmes at the new site.

4.4 High profile Heritage and Culture projects – Coventry City of Culture 2021 and Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022

Two high profile cultural events on Warwickshire’s doorstep will create significant opportunities for the development of heritage and culture across the county. Investment in Coventry City of Culture 2021 and the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham 2022 have been identified within Warwickshire’s draft Heritage & Culture Strategy as an opportunity to raise the profile of the county’s cultural offer, develop new partnerships and attract inward investment.

4.5 Increased archival storage at the Warwickshire County Record Office

The need for storage capacity is a fundamental requirement for an Archive service to function and meet the needs of the authority. Archival storage space within the current WCRO site at Priory Park, Warwick, is forecast to run out of space in 2021 – with the resultant impact on service delivery.

¹ “*Museums Taskforce Report and Recommendations*”, report of the Museums Association, 2018

Rationalisation of existing collection storage has been underway since 2010 to make the most of available space. Investigation into potential short- and long-term storage options, including the potential utilisation of Shire Hall

basement (originally the home of the archive service until the move the Priory Park) and potential extension of the strong room storage at Priory Park are currently underway. Digital preservation is also being explored (digital preservation is the storage and retrieval of records in digital format – rather than the traditional paper archive), but is unlikely to be a solution for the county council in the short to medium term as no long term process for digital preservation has been found, or adopted, by any accredited Archive at regional or national level to date.

4.6 Digital Preservation

One of the challenges facing the Archive service is the need to address future digital preservation for WCC records and public records. The majority of records now created are done so in a digital format. It is imperative the Archive service is able to preserve these indefinitely. As such, the establishment of procedures for the transfer and storage of digital born county council records and public records will be a key focus for collections development over the next 5 years.

4.7 HCW is increasingly working in partnership with other WCC service areas and external organisations across the county to develop a more strategic approach to meeting WCC priorities, with a particular focus on inclusion and wellbeing. Areas of work currently underway include:

- The development of a new audience development strategy, with a focus on long term strategies to support greater breadth of heritage and culture engagement across the county
- Development of a new arts education partnership for Warwickshire (Arts Council funded) - Arts Connect
- Initiation and development of the Creative Health Alliance

5. The Wider Service Offer

5.1 The Heritage and Culture service works towards achieving council objectives, local priorities and wider agendas by actively supporting:

- **Health and wellbeing** through engagement activity such as the Dementia Cafe
- **Formal Learning** through heritage education programmes at St Johns House to research visits to the Museum Stores by FE/HE students
- **Lifelong learning** through summer holiday activities, curator talks to adult workshops
- **Community and a sense of place** through helping Warwickshire people access their family and community history
- **The independence and wellbeing of older people** who form the core of our volunteer teams
- **Democracy** through the proper management of public records

Through the preservation and provision of access to Warwickshire's historic

collections and archives, the HCW service manages Warwickshire's irreplaceable historic assets for future generations to both learn from and enjoy.

6. Environmental Impact

- 6.1 The service operates from a number of historic buildings, including Grade 1 and 2* listed, however the service takes account of the need to minimise the environmental impact where possible. An example of this would be the work within the WCRO strongrooms to reduce the need for the air conditioning system to be running continually. Air conditioning/electricity use has been reduced significantly, reducing running costs whilst maintaining the environmental stability of the archival storage. The WCRO Conservation Officer is now being asked to advise other Archive services in how to take a similar approach.

7. Financial Implications

Two areas of work within HCW's development opportunities (outlined above) may have financial implications:

- 7.1 Archival Storage: If the recommendation to instruct officers to investigate options for future storage of archival records is approved, a scoping exercise to identify possible solutions will need to be completed. Any long-term archival storage solutions identified will have a capital cost.
- 7.2 Heritage & Culture Strategy: It will be ensured that the Strategy is deliverable within resource projections, budget allocations and savings in the emerging Medium-Term Financial Strategy and will be subject to the final outcome of that process. Resource will be required to deliver such an ambitious Strategy. Some budget and staffing will be provided by Business and Customer Services. The Service will also be working with colleagues who are leading on the City of Culture programme to which the county council has made a financial contribution.

8. Conclusion

Heritage & Culture Warwickshire continues to move forward and develop its services to meet the needs of its customers, and to meet broader county council priorities. The development work underway in relation to the proposed Heritage & Culture Strategy for Warwickshire will provide an additional opportunity to progress, capitalising on local and regional support

and the investment and profile of events such as Coventry City of Culture 2021.

9. Background Papers

None.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Ayub Khan/Emma Andrews	01926 412492
Assistant Director	Kushal Birla	01926 412013
Strategic Director	Rob Powell	01926 412564
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Heather Timms	

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): none

Other members: none

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Heritage and Culture Infographic 2018/19

Appendix 2 – Service area profiles and case studies

A Year in Heritage & Culture Warwickshire

Appendix 1



LEARNING



112
collections were
acquired for
Warwickshire

7,540
documents
were produced
at the County
Record Office



310
people hunted
for fossils



4,852
children attended
our school events



3,364
people attended
our school holiday
programme



840
under 5's
attended
"Arty Toys"

1,794
enquiries
answered



123
events for
children and
families



433
children attended
sleepovers at the
Market Hall Museum



89,527
site visitors



COMMUNITY, HEALTH & WELLBEING



10,153
volunteer hours



92
people attended our
"Dementia Cafes"



9,502
people attended our
community events

DIGITAL & INFORMATION



869,061
page views on
Our Warwickshire



4,049,454
hits on online
resources



261
access to information
requests answered



9,013
items added to the
archives online catalogue



69,851
digital images
created



1,147
followers on
Instagram



4,038
followers on
Facebook



9,236
followers on
Twitter

Heritage & Culture Warwickshire (HCW) Service Area Profiles & case studies

Heritage & Culture Warwickshire is organised into 6 teams, each with its own area of professional specialism -

Warwickshire County Record Office

Warwickshire County Record Office (WCRO) is based in Priory Park, where its purpose-built premises provide safe and controlled accommodation for almost three miles of archives in 4 strongrooms and is managed by a team of 9 FTE archive and conservation specialists. The strongrooms were last extended in 2002 and the office provides services and facilities for up to 80 visitors per day. WCRO's archive collections date back to the 12th century and contains information about all aspects of life and work in Warwickshire. WCRO holds a coherent record of local government in Warwickshire since 1625. WCRO holds records of WCC from 1889 and of its predecessor (the court of Quarter Sessions in its administrative and judicial role) from 1625.

WCRO holds records of over 250 Church of England parishes including the registers of baptism, marriage and burials and the records of various parish officials. WCRO also holds over 5,000 items of manorial records, dating from 1334, which provide the most detailed source for medieval village life in Warwickshire.

Many of the records of the large landed estates are deposited including those for Warwick Castle, Newdigate of Arbury Hall, Throckmorton of Coughton Court, Lucy of Charlecote, Seymour of Ragley Hall and Feilding of Newhham Paddox. These collections are rich in deeds, rentals, maps, correspondence and accounts and provide research material for many social and political topics, significant people and events. There are also substantial collections from local institutions including the Union Workhouse, Warwickshire Quarter Sessions and Warwick County Lunatic Asylum, Hatton.

WCRO provides access to records to a wide range of individuals, including members of the public wishing to discover more about their family or local history. This family history research is predominantly for pleasure but can include those wanting to identify any hereditary diseases, especially those relating to mental health, and families locating relatives (for example following adoption) or other family members.

WCRO plays a key role in ensuring that WCC and other public bodies are accountable and open to scrutiny, helping to provide public trust and confidence in such bodies. A recent example of this is the visits by members of Infected Blood Inquiry in May 2019 and June 2019 to examine the records of the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust.

Case Study - Infected Blood Inquiry

The Infected Blood Inquiry has completed two visits to the County Record Office to conduct research into historic Warwickshire Health Authority records. Of national importance, the inquiry has been established to examine why patients in the UK were given infected blood, the effect this has had on their families and the response of relevant authorities to the crisis. A team of six lawyers have successfully located information useful to the inquiry within record office collections.

Prior to the first visit, record office staff utilised their expertise and knowledge to locate records of interest on behalf of the inquiry. Contact was made with local NHS Trusts to gain permission for the inquiry to access the material. This avoided any need for the inquiry to compel the council and/or local NHS Trusts to produce the documentation, saving time and reducing the burden on the public purse.

Warwickshire County Museum Service

The Warwickshire Museum Service is based at Market Hall Museum and Montague Road Museum stores. The service looks after the Warwickshire Museum collection of over 800,000 objects and leads the exhibition programme at Market Hall. The collection includes objects and artefacts from across a broad range of disciplines, including archaeology, natural history, geology, numismatics, social history, photography, toys & dolls, costume & textiles and musical instruments. The 3.6 FTE team work with regional partners, communities across the County and teams within the County Council to promote heritage and culture, interpret our significant and unique collections and to make our heritage personally and virtually accessible for all. They also take responsibility for all Treasure finds in the County e.g. the recent South Warwickshire Roman Hoard, and provide professional advice in relation to archaeological finds and deposits relating to the Warwickshire HS2 route.

Visitor Services & Operation Team

HCW's visitor services team of 4.2 FTE is based at Market Hall Museum, which houses displays on a rotating basis from both Warwickshire's museum and archive collections, and from community co-created projects. Highlights include the Sheldon Tapestry Map of Warwickshire - recently loaned to The British Museum's summer exhibition, the second largest early Roman coin hoard in the country, a live observation beehive and Giant Irish deer. Following a HLF funded refurbishment in 2016, the Museum now welcomes over 75,000 visitors a year - and supports the delivery of an annual programme of community engagement projects ranging from the weekly Arty Tots and their grandparents under 5's session, monthly Dementia Cafe, monthly 'lates' - evening opening including open-mic nights, board games, specialist talks, through to family school holiday activities and community 'Knit and Natter' sessions.

Learning & Community Engagement

The Learning and Community Engagement Team (LaCE) of 1.3 FTE staff provide an annual programme of community engagement, participation and curriculum focused activity across all HCW's sites, outreach to schools and to other partner sites (e.g. Kingsbury Water Park) alongside the delivery of an established schools programme at St Johns House Museum in Warwick.

During the year, the team will develop and deliver activity as diverse as:

- KS1/KS2 Victorian Laundry and Schoolroom sessions at St Johns House
- Brownie/Cub sleepovers at Market Hall Museum
- Summer Holiday summer programme 2019 - 'Moon Rock', including moon landing family day, resources for under 5's, astronaut 'training', community talk 'The moon in science and science fiction'
- Family fossil finding sessions at Cross Hands Quarry
- Stone Age to Iron Age sessions at Kingsbury Water Park
- 'Crime & Punishment' KS2 sessions at the County Record Office
- 'Mr Magnolia' Theatre in the garden for family audiences at St Johns House
- Monthly dementia cafe at Market Hall Museum
- Free 'Time Travellers' summer holiday programme for pupils in receipt of FSM - funded through fundraising activity
- Newly developed programme for home-educated children and young people, KS1 - KS3
- Volunteer-led monthly 'Knit and Natter' session at Market Hall Museum
- Delivery of the annual Heritage Open days - including Chesterton Windmill

Case Study - ReCollections Dementia cafe

ReCollections is a dementia café at Market Hall Museum. It uses the unique setting of the museum alongside items in the collection and creative activity to engage and inspire older people living with dementia and their loved ones.

Sessions take place once a month on a Monday afternoon when the Museum is closed to the general public; with limited spaces (maximum 12) participants can relax in a calm, inviting and intimate environment and take part in tailored artist-led activities, curator talks, museum tours and object handling alongside games and refreshments.

Current attendees have said: *"It was good to see the collection and jog memories and to have such a lovely building used for such an event", "It's brilliant, really innovative...to see her participate when I didn't think she would", "We always come away feeling positive"*

County Arts Service

The County Arts Officer of 0.5 FTE initiates, supports and brokers partnerships with a wide range of arts and non-arts organisations to develop an accessible, high

quality and sustainable arts infrastructure across the county, raising the profile of the arts within Warwickshire, regionally and nationally. As the professional arts lead for the County, the arts officer provides professional arts development advice both internally and externally, raises funds to support the development and delivery of projects around the county and has a particular focus on using the arts as a tool for supporting broader WCC objectives - particularly in relation to health and wellbeing. The County Arts Officer is currently working with arts organisations across Warwickshire to support potential engagement activity as part of Coventry City of Culture 2021, and is part of the leadership teams for both the Creative Health Alliance and arts education partnership Arts Connect.

Case Study - Warwickshire Open Studios

Set up and managed by the County Arts Service for the first time in 2002, Warwickshire Open Studios has helped local artists and designer makers open up their studios, offer exhibitions, demonstrations and opportunities for the public to buy their work. Now an annual event, it has grown to become the County's largest exhibition of visual art and craft, supporting a broad range of individual practitioners and makers.

In 2008, the County Arts Service worked closely with a group of volunteer artists to take over the running of the event, which has now become self-sustaining. This event now contributes over £1.3 million annually to the local economy, welcoming thousands of visitors to over 200 venues across the County.

HCW Development & Volunteering Team

The HCW Development and Volunteering Team of 2.9 FTE has the responsibility of developing all aspects of HCW's service delivery - with a particular focus on audience development, volunteering and growing commercial income. Following the refurbishment of Market Hall Museum the team have launched a venue and events hire package - which is beginning to provide additional income for the service, as well as supporting the implementation of a new cafe and shop in the Museum. The team have prioritised generating closer links and raising the profile of HCW with Warwick town centre and Warwickshire and Coventry business networks such as the C&W Chamber and Shakespeare's England, along with supporting WCC regeneration and tourism initiatives through the Destination Management Partnerships.

HCW's volunteer co-ordinator provides the link between HCW and third sector organisations eg WCAVA, as well as recruiting, supporting and providing long term development opportunities for HCW's volunteer team. HCW's 110 regular volunteers provide the service with additional support in a wide range of areas - from public facing activities such as our Arty Tots under 5's sessions, opening Chesterton Windmill, meeting and greeting visitors at Market Hall through to 'behind the scenes' conservation, cataloguing and transcription work in the museum and archive. HCW

volunteers regularly win awards, the most recent being the 2019 WCAVA Annual Volunteer Award in the Creative and Heritage category.

Case Study - Volunteering at the WCRO

Douglas was a retired GP with an interest in local history. He approached the WCRO to see if we could shed any light on a local building he was investigating. When he heard about an ambitious project to scan, caption and compile a public database of local historic photographs, he signed up as a volunteer.

Douglas volunteered at the County Record Office for over 10 years. He learned to use a computer for the first time, and contributed his enthusiasm and local knowledge to a wide range of projects. He became friendly with other volunteers and became part of an active network of like-minded people.

When his wife died, Douglas's family were concerned about whether he could continue to live alone. His regular contact with the County Record Office was a key factor in Douglas' and his family's decision that his quality of life, his active contribution to society through his voluntary work and his social network were so important as to make it inappropriate to consider residential care at that point. Douglas continued to volunteer on a regular basis until a few months before his death aged 93.



Warwickshire's

**HERITAGE
& CULTURE
STRATEGY
2020—2025**



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Introduction

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

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



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

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

Izzi Seccombe
Leader of Warwickshire County Council



Warwickshire Today

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

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

Economy

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



Heritage and Culture

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





Challenges

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

County Council Context

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

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

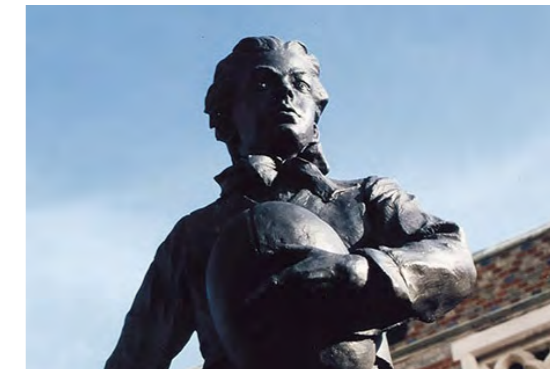
In addition, heritage and culture will play a key role in the Place Strategy that is currently being developed.



Heritage and Culture Defined

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

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



A statue of William Webb Ellis in Rugby.

In the context of this strategy, heritage and culture:

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

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

Why We Need A Heritage & Culture Strategy

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



Automotive
production line in
Leamington Spa.

Vision and Objectives

Our vision is:

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

Our vision is underpinned by the following objectives:

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



Recent Research: Department of Culture, Media and Sport

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

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

publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcmds/734/73402.htm



Recent Research: Arts Council England

Three key facts underpin Arts Council England's starting point to explaining *why art and culture matters*:

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



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

arts council.org.uk/make-case-art-and-culture/why-art-and-culture-matters



Recent Research: Culture is Digital

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

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

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



gov.uk/government/publications/culture-is-digital

Big City Events

Coventry City Of Culture 2021

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

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

coventry2021.co.uk/

Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022

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

birmingham.gov.uk/Birmingham2022



What Will The Strategy Do?

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



Health and Well-being

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

Objectives

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

We will:

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



Sense of Place

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

Objectives

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

We will:

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

Economic Vibrancy

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

Objectives

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

We will:

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



Sector Engagement

Warwickshire County Council is spearheading the Strategy in collaboration with the local heritage and culture sector. Initial engagement was via an online survey and an all-day conference in Warwick at which representatives of partner authorities and heritage/arts organisations large and small were able to contribute their ideas, priorities and expertise via a series of workshops.

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

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

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

Discussions at the conference were wide-ranging. Some recurring themes emerged: Delegates felt the Heritage and Culture Strategy should be based on a shared identity and infrastructure and that it should be for everyone. The Strategy should be countywide, cross-departmental, cross-sector and responsive to the needs of local communities. Advocacy, promotion and sustainability were key issues and there were calls for 'grass roots' activity and engagement. The audience was strongly in favour of developing a shared action plan for the county.



The Old Shire Hall.

Governance

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

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



Needle making benches in Nuneaton.



Working Together To Achieve Our Priorities



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

Year 1 Action Plan

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

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

Over the next six months we will:

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

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

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

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

What Will Success Look Like?

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

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

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

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



Next Steps:

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

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

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

How can you get involved?

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

heritageandculture@warwickshire.gov.uk

How Will We Measure Success?

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

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



Thank You!

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