

A Draft Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire

Enjoy!

What's it all about?

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership, made up of the ten District Councils and the County Council, has been working together to produce the first cultural strategy for the whole of Hertfordshire. This strategy called Enjoy! Hertfordshire revolves around six key messages. These messages are:

Enjoy! Message No 1

Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by enabling all members of the community to have more and easier access to different cultural and leisure pursuits.

Enjoy! Message No 2

Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by offering children, young people and adults the opportunity to reach their full potential through access to learning and information

Enjoy! Message No 3

Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by encouraging children and young people to access and enjoy cultural and leisure activities

Enjoy! Message No 4

Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by making Hertfordshire a more prosperous and attractive place to live and work

Enjoy! Message No 5

Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by valuing and supporting the diverse range of cultural and leisure activities enjoyed across the county

Enjoy! Message No 6

Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by working in partnership at national, regional and local agencies to deliver a range of cultural and leisure activities effectively.

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership feels these messages best sum up what the cultural strategy could achieve for Hertfordshire. They also reflect the cross cutting agendas that the Department for Culture Media and Sport [DCMS] feel should be addressed by all organisations producing a cultural strategy. These agendas include lifelong learning, public health, community safety, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, regeneration and the 'Active Community' initiative.

The goals for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as outlined in the 2002 Spending Review are opportunity, access and quality. In common with the DCMS the aim of Hertfordshire's cultural strategy is to offer everyone the opportunity to improve the quality of their lives by being able to access high-quality cultural and leisure activities.

Key themes in the Spending Review are:

- Children and young people
- Building communities
- Maximising the contribution that tourism, creative and leisure industries make to the economy
- Modernising delivery

The Enjoy! messages also provide a framework for Hertfordshire to take account of regional, national and other county developments such as Hertfordshire Together and Local Strategic Partnerships. The messages reinforce and support these partnerships. At a more practical and local level they will help inform and support funding applications by the cultural community in Hertfordshire. Local councils will also be producing individual strategies.

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will work together with regional agencies, such as East England Arts, Sport England, the East of England Tourist Board and local private sector providers. These partnerships intend to improve the cultural and leisure opportunities available and to build a sustainable cultural economy. We can all benefit by recognising the important part culture plays in:

- Preserving and building local community and county identity
- Sustaining communities and their environment
- Improving the quality of life for our communities
- Regeneration and attracting investment into Hertfordshire
- Provide the catalyst to instil a sense of Hertfordshire identity

Enjoy! Hertfordshire presents an opportunity to celebrate and showcase the best that Hertfordshire has to offer. The strategy will demonstrate the value cultural and leisure activities add to our economy. It will influence our planning for the next five years and inform other areas, such as community plans and service reviews, and vice versa. The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will review Enjoy! as part of a continuing and evolving process.

Why are we doing it?

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has encouraged us to take stock of our county's cultural activities to enable us to plan more strategically. Communities in Hertfordshire currently enjoy a rich cultural life, which can benefit all, from young children to older people, from workers to tourists. By working together with all providers, the Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership can make the county an even more prosperous and better place to live, work and visit.

What does culture mean to you?

Culture can mean many things as we discovered through our consultation with the people of Hertfordshire. It includes:

- ◆ Walking in the countryside
- ◆ Going to a football match
- ◆ Watching a video
- ◆ Skateboarding
- ◆ Meeting your friends
- ◆ Visiting a gallery
- ◆ Taking a child to the local playground
- ◆ Singing in a choir
- ◆ Playing sport
- ◆ Going to the cinema or theatre
- ◆ Gardening
- ◆ Using your local library
- ◆ Participating in a local festival or event
- ◆ Visiting historical homes and churches
- ◆ Eating out
- ◆ A thriving film industry

Culture covers all of these and more. The range of activities on offer is increasing and people have higher expectations of culture and leisure provision. For some, culture might be something for pleasure or fun, while for others it may be a way of improving the quality of life. For many the cultural industries provide a livelihood and it is important that this sector's needs are considered in the overall planning.

Cultural activities may move and inspire us, make us think differently or make us want to learn new skills. They may influence life choices such as where we live, what work we do or how we keep healthy and live our lives.

The benefits are clearly recognised, culture is essential to our feeling of well being. It is important for our physical and mental health, our social integration, community spirit and allows us to both celebrate and express our identity. The cultural economy makes a significant contribution to the wealth and employment of Hertfordshire. It adds considerable value at both economic and social level.

To find out people's views on current and future cultural opportunities, comments were invited through questionnaires and the county website. Local clubs and organisations and community groups were asked for their views and ideas for the future. Those responses have helped shape this plan.

What do we enjoy in Hertfordshire?

Hertfordshire is a county of rich contrasts, stretching from the edge of Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire, in the north, to the outskirts of London in the south. It borders Buckinghamshire in the west and Essex in the east and is currently one of the six counties in the Eastern Region. While there is no natural centre or major urban conurbation there is a rich mix of rural and urban environments that add to the attraction of the county.

Markets towns such as Hitchin, St Albans and Bishops' Stortford offer a rich historical environment, sitting alongside new towns such as Stevenage or the world's first Garden City, Letchworth.

A significant amount of post-war building added to the size of many existing communities e.g. Hemel Hempstead. There are 74 recognised communities in the county with populations ranging from 1,045 to 91,302. The county has a population of 1,050,828. Adapting to the challenges of the modern world, while respecting our past, has always been part of the Hertfordshire way of life.

Town population figures are based on the Office of National Statistics mid-year estimates 2000

Hertfordshire is a prosperous county with one of the strongest economies in the UK. We enjoy high standards of living and low levels of unemployment but our commuting workforce and close proximity to London influence our economy. Criss-crossed with major transport and communication routes the county is well placed to compliment the cultural and leisure activities readily available in London and our neighbouring authorities. These routes also offer the opportunity to build links with National and European partners.

Hertfordshire countryside makes the county popular days trip or short break destination. The many fascinating museums, stately homes, churches and galleries all play a role in the economic make up of the county. Tourism benefits the Hertfordshire economy by £460 million annually.

A cultural album might include the following snapshots:

- Stained glass by the Pre-Raphaelites at Waterford Church
- Henry Moore foundation, Perry Green
- The Rainbow Festival in Watford
- Hatfield House, English Tourist Board top tourist attraction of the year 2001
- The Grand Union Canal
- Cathedral and Abbey of St Albans
- Watford Football Club
- Saracens Rugby Club
- Digswell Arts Trust, Welwyn Garden City and Stevenage
- Dickinson Paper Mills, Apsley, Hemel Hempstead
- Leavesden Studios, home to Harry Potter and James Bond
- Aldenham Country Park
- Shaw's Corner
- English Sinfonia
- Rhythms of the World Festival, Hitchin
- Royston Cave
- Scott's Grotto, Ware
- Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum, Tring
- Letchworth and Welwyn Garden Cities
- Mill Green Museum, Hatfield

- SNAP and Trestle Theatre Companies
- Great North Cycle Way
- Knebworth House
- The Roman Baths at Welwyn

A selection of the above will be used

This is only part of the cultural background of Hertfordshire. Let 's take a look at the overall make up of the county.

Hertfordshire's Profile



This is only part of the cultural background of Hertfordshire. There are also key socio-economic factors that we must be aware of when planning for the future.

Population

- There will be a rise in the number of people over 85 in the next ten years with one in five of them likely to suffer from dementia
- 4,573 children have a statement of special educational needs
- There are 894 looked after children
- There are about 20,000 single mothers with the highest concentrations in Stevenage and Watford*
- Identified minority ethnic groups make up 5% of the population**

- The largest ethnic group is Indian with a total population of 16,000 which is 1.96% of the overall county population**
- Watford has the largest proportion of ethnic minority residents accounting for just over 10% of the District's total population**

* *Regional Trends 36, 2001*

** *Office of National Statistics Labour Force Survey, March 2000 – February 2001*

Employment

The county's future competitiveness is clearly linked to our ability to generate business locally, or attract via inward investment, high quality employment opportunities for our communities.

- Hertfordshire has below average levels of unemployment, 1.5% as compared to the national average of 3.2% In some wards the level of long term unemployment are significantly higher. [Figures National Statistics April 2002]
- The largest sectors in the county are financial, business and distribution. Hotels and catering and other [mainly public] services accounting for 26%, 18% and 16% of total output respectively. Emerging sectors such as film, media and tourism all add significantly to the local economy. In 2001 research and development, retail, education, health, social work and construction were the largest employers in Hertfordshire
- In 2001 one in five of all unemployed people were aged 18-24, the lowest youth level since 1990.
- Overall Hertfordshire has a highly skilled workforce, with only 10% possessing formal qualifications [Hertfordshire TEC 2000]
- Just over a third of employers in Hertfordshire report that managerial skill requirements are increasing. The most commonly cited driver of skill needs is advances in ICT
- Those outside employment find it more difficult to access learning and training opportunities. The 1998 Household Survey found that 30% of those involved in leisure relied upon keeping up to date through the use of books, videos, the Internet and CD ROMs.
- Lone parents find accessing many services difficult, and re-entering the job market is hindered by the need for childcare and flexible working hours. These factors also place barriers to those trying to access learning and re-training opportunities.

Transport

- Road transport links within the county are predominantly north to south, concentrating on the major A1M, M1, and A10 routes. The M25 cuts across the south of the county adding to the considerable number of journeys by car in Hertfordshire
- Movement across the county East-West is far harder and in some cases is near impossible by public transport
- Accessing public transport for non-car owners can be particularly difficult in the more rural areas of the county, this makes it harder for individuals to access information, cultural and leisure activities and learning opportunities
- Hertfordshire has five main railway lines into London, and out to East Anglia, the Midlands, Wales and the North
- Stansted and Luton Airports, operating internal and international flights, are both close to the county boundaries and offer significant opportunities for promoting tourism in the county

Partnership Working

We have much to be proud of in the county. Cultural and leisure activities can make a real and lasting contribution to the quality of our lives: it might be sport helping to improve health, tourism helping to provide employment opportunities or using the arts to foster a sense of community and identity.

The cultural strategy will identify how we can build on this and plan better for our future cultural and leisure provision. By bringing all the key players together we can work in partnership to develop activities that will benefit communities across the county over the next five years. Alongside our county developments we will be looking to place ourselves in a good position in order to attract inward investment from national and European sources.

Many voluntary groups, working in local communities, are the catalysts for much of the cultural activity in the county. The contribution they make to the county culturally, socially and economically is both recognised and valued. This group of people is committed to making an important contribution to the well being of their local communities by giving their time, energy and skills so freely. Enjoy! will establish a framework to help them attract funding and support their work. By working together, we can focus and build upon existing partnerships and share knowledge and good practice, which will benefit us all.

Enjoy! Consultation

The Partnership wanted to ensure that everyone could make the most of living in the county and enjoy what was on offer.

In April and May of this year the Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership distributed 15,000 copies of the leaflet 'Enjoy! Making the most of living in Hertfordshire supported by a press campaign. It was also available on the county website www.hertsdirect.org/enjoy.

10,000 leaflets were placed in libraries and other public venues, 2,500 were given out to members of the public at a Road Show held around the county. The Road Show did not visit Watford and Stevenage as the local councils had recently consulted local residents about their own cultural strategies. These results have informed this strategy. Staff from the councils making up the Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership went out to meet the public and discussed the questionnaire with them.

The remaining 2,500 leaflets were sent out using direct mail to individuals, community groups, voluntary groups, clubs and through established meetings. Groups, who were particularly targeted, included young people and those aged sixty plus.

The survey asked the public to tell us what they enjoyed doing in their free time and to rank various statements in order of importance. The results have been analysed and will be used to inform and shape the individual cultural and leisure strategies being developed by all Hertfordshire authorities.

Public Response to the Questionnaire

We had an overall return of 5.3 %. 25% of these returns were on line and 75% were returned using freepost.

Response by Age Group

Age group	% of responses
5 - 14	7
15 - 19	5
20 – 29	15
30 - 45	31
46 – 65	30
66 – 80	7
80+	2
Did not give their age	3

Top Twenty Activities

	Cultural Activity
1	Cinema, television and video
2	Eating out
3	Meeting friends
4	Countryside and outdoor activities
5	Food and drink
6	Shopping
7	Gardens and gardening
8	Theatre and plays
9	Libraries
10	Museums
11	Health and fitness
12	Music and singing
13	Computer games and the Internet
14	Sport
15	Courses and learning
16	Do-it-yourself
17	Art and design
18	Architecture and historical buildings
19	Family history
20	Local clubs and societies

We asked the question “What do you think would make the most difference to you or your community?”

The survey identified the following six points as priority areas to be focussed on and improved:

- more young people involved in activities
- encourage better public transport for cultural events
- organisations working together to improve access to cultural and leisure provision
- activities to improve people's mental and physical health and welfare
- better facilities in low income areas
- more learning opportunities for all age groups

We also asked members of the public involved in voluntary groups what they felt would be most useful to their work. The top six choices here were:

- identify what is missing locally to help plan for the future
- provide more support to develop skills and knowledge
- work with others to identify funding
- encourage local councils to work closely with local businesses and accommodation providers
- encourage closer working between cultural groups and their local councils
- develop greater understanding of the social and economic impact of cultural activities

Both sets of responses have helped us identify your priorities. The details of how we will achieve these can be found in the action plans at the back of the document.

Messages

On the following pages you will find the messages and examples of many exciting projects and initiatives that have been taking place across the county.

Enjoy! Message No 1

- **Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by enabling all members of the community to have more and easier access to different cultural and leisure pursuits.**

Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership believes that everyone in Hertfordshire should be able to take part in cultural activities if they want to. We want the county to be a place where these activities can flourish. Opportunities should be equally available throughout the county and a person's age, health, ethnic group or ability should not be a barrier to taking part.

CASE STUDY

Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies have a small team of volunteers working together to transcribe Ebenezer Howard's [the founder of the Garden City movement], shorthand written documents. These are currently held in the county archives. The ability to read and translate the shorthand is a dying skill and the group is made up of older people who have used it in their earlier careers. The project will unlock the contents of these documents for the first time and historians and planning experts are eager to see what they contain. The project is particularly well timed as the 100th anniversary of Letchworth the first garden city, is in 2003. Hertfordshire Archives and Local studies [HALS] intend to put on an exhibition of Howard's documents and the work of the volunteers. The documents will also be published in a book.

SNAPSHOT PROJECTS

- The Brothers and Sisters Club based at the Grovehill / Woodhall Adventure Playground Farm in Dacorum Borough Council provides a fun and supportive environment, once a month for children and young people who have siblings with disabilities or special needs. It offers opportunities to share experiences and take part in play activities, drama, arts and crafts and an annual residential trip.
- There are green fingers at Shepherd Day Centre in Rickmansworth. In 2001 twelve Prince's Trust volunteers age 16 to 24 demolished two green houses that were beyond repair and totally refurbished a third. With a grant from MENCAP the people attending the day centre [who have

learning disabilities] have bought new garden equipment to help cultivate and help make the garden grow again.

- The Soundhouse Music Group, enjoy both listening and performing through jamming sessions and going to gigs. Weekly group sessions for people with mental health problems are built around performance with workshops in percussion, vocals and songwriting. Last year Soundhouse recorded a CD of favourite tracks and songs written by group members. The group meet at the East Herts Community Support team premises.
- The Playscheme Referral Project in Three Rivers District enables low income families with children or those who are in need of respite to access playscheme provision during the Easter and Summer holidays via a referral for a nominal fee of £1.
- Expanding Our Audience is a two-year project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and is designed to encourage people on low incomes to engage with their local museum. All of the projects involve local people and offer museum staff the opportunity to meet and work with those who don't usually visit museums. There are five linked projects across the county:
 - Kick Off football project at Hitchin Museum
 - The Face of Watford – an art project at Watford Museum
 - Toddler Time – family learning at Mill Green Museum
 - My Stuff – contemporary collecting at Stevenage Museum
 - You Are What You Eat – healthy living in Borehamwood
- Light Years is a Dance Group, based in Hertford, for women over 50 who are qualified dancers or have danced professionally. Led by a professional dance teacher, the group devises and performs a range of choreographed pieces created for their own entertainment and enjoyment. Light Years allows them to rediscover and extend their dance skills, meet with a group of like minded people and keep fit and healthy in a enjoyable and satisfying way.
- Heritage Open Days form part of European Heritage Days, which takes place in 46 countries. The Civic Trust assists hundreds of organisations to open historic properties across the country. Most of the sites are not usually open to the public or charge an entrance fee. Over one weekend in September they open their doors to 1 million people. A few of those taking part in Hertfordshire include Verulamium Museum, St Albans Clock Tower, Sopwell Nunnery, St Helena's College and the British School, Hitchin
- East Herts District Council is piloting an integrated summer playscheme in Buntingford. The aim is to include children with special needs into the mainstream programme. The number of youngsters with Special Needs who attend will be monitored. The intention is to roll the programme out across the District next summer

- Hertcard has been put in place in Hertsmere to assist the Primary Care Trust in delivering their Health Improvement Programme. The card has been introduced to encourage people on low income to take part in a healthier active lifestyle. The scheme enables a greater cross-section of the community to use Hertsmere Leisure centres at a reduced price. The card is available freely to all residents of Hertsmere who are on income support or job seekers allowance, disability benefit, students aged 16 plus and people on Government training schemes.
- Verulamium Museum in St Albans is developing an interactive web game on the history of St Albans. Bringing local history to life, it will involve players in battle with historical ‘baddies’, avoiding real disasters on the way, such as the plague. Historical artefacts are collected on route to build your own museum. The adventures will support the National Curriculum and is aimed at children and teachers.
- The Broxbourne Midsummer Festival of Arts is an annual celebration of creativity to appeal to a wide variety of tastes. It offers a broad spectrum of activities and performances which include an art competition, outdoor Shakespeare, cinema, debate and heritage events. Organised by the Broxbourne Arts Forum, the programme is delivered by local people and professional artists at seventeen venues across the borough. Partners include The Borough of Broxbourne, local businesses and numerous patrons.

Enjoy! Message no 2

- **Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by offering children, young people and adults the opportunity to reach their full potential through access to learning and information.**

Lifelong learning plays a vital part in all our lives. There are many ways of accessing learning, both formally and informally. Many cultural organisations provide the opportunity to local people to take part in all types of learning. These include libraries, museums, the University of the Third Age, arts organisations, and Workers Educational Association. We want to make sure that people have the chance to learn in whatever way suits them best, including the Internet and other new technologies. We will also aim to help all our young people have access to the learning opportunities they need. By working with schools, colleges, the University of Hertfordshire, Connexions and the Youth Service we can help make this easier for them.

CASE STUDY

The Arts Channel, which is part of the county website HertsDirect, www.hertsdirect.org.uk/arts provides hundreds of art-related contacts. These range from artists to exhibition spaces and arts organisations to funding advice. The Channel also provides links to many regional and national sources of arts information. The Channel was developed in response to a long recognised demand by Hertfordshire’s arts community for an up to date source of information on all aspects of the arts. Other arts professionals in the

county advised on its content during the Channel's development. There is also the facility for two news features on the front page, which are regularly updated. These stories are submitted by a wide cross section of people and organisations with an interest in the arts.

There are also dedicated Channels on HertsDirect for young people and those with an interest in heritage and the environment. HertsDirect can be accessed free at your local library

SNAPSHOT PROJECTS

- First Gear is a summer project supported by Dacorum District Council in partnership with the Youth Offending Team. Aimed at young people at risk of offending it is a 30 hour First Gear course accredited by UK Youth which gives the opportunity to learn basic driving and mechanic skills. It also explores attitudes towards cars and car ownership and responsibilities of life in general
- Bookstart is a national scheme that aims to introduce all babies and their parents to the benefits of libraries and reading. When a baby reaches 8 months a health visitor gives their parent or carer a bag with two books in, as well as information on reading and how to join the local library. There is a voucher for a third free book if a baby becomes a member of the library. The scheme has proved a great success and there are identifiable long-term benefits to both children and their parents being introduced to reading so early.
- The Community History Project based in Borehamwood and Elstree was set up by local community volunteers to educate the public about the history and archaeology in their area. A key aim was to involve as many sections of the local community as possible. It has successfully attracted a range of commercial and local authority funding to set up a small museum in Borehamwood. As well as displays there is a small, but growing, local history archive and a large collection of photographs. The enthusiastic team of volunteers is involved in stewarding, archiving, producing displays and education resources, including publications, for schools and groups.
- The Leavesden Community Fitness Centre is a joint venture between Watford YMCA, Three Rivers District Council and the Health Authority. An existing hospital building has been converted into a community resource offering fitness provision, children and young people's activities with full day care provision. It is in the Leavesden Country Park, which was funded through planning gain.
- The Over 50's and Going Places Scheme in Welwyn Hatfield District offers the opportunity to take part in a full programme of activities including leisure, learning and visits to places of interest. These include bridge, IT, line dancing and theatre trips.

- Sports Wheels, based in Welwyn Hatfield District, is an outreach scheme to take sport to young people on the streets. The scheme's philosophy is that sport can be used as a tool to combat crime and divert attention to healthier and more educational pursuits. Benefits include community pride, improved health and fitness and increased self-confidence. Commercial sponsorship underpins the scheme providing free access to the participants.
- The WAP tour of Verulamium Park in St Albans will allow people to use WAP on their personal mobile phones to walk around the park and learn about the Roman City, whenever it suits them. This route will be totally flexible and accommodate wheelchair users and those who need to stay on paths. It uses technology that has been enthusiastically adopted by young people who do not always feel comfortable in museums.
- The Paper Trail is an exciting project based at Apsley near Hemel Hempstead. The plan is to transform the heritage site of the old John Dickinson and Frogmore paper mills into an international focus for paper and print. A fundraising campaign is underway to be able to offer information, entertainment and business development opportunities on the site. Partners include Dacorum Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council and numerous businesses and patrons.
- Watford Borough Council is looking at ways to increase the number of schools who use the education/outreach service provided by Watford Museum. The Heritage Officer will work closely with schools to develop suitable programmes that will support the delivery of the National Curriculum. This will include the creation of ten project boxes that will be available to loan for teachers.

Enjoy! Message no 3

- **Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by encouraging children and young people to access and enjoy cultural and leisure activities.**

We want the children and young people of Hertfordshire to have the widest range of cultural and leisure opportunities open to them. Through a strong and flourishing cultural sector they can take part in sport or arts activities, learn about and enjoy their heritage and environment, play in safety and enjoy our parks and countryside. For those children and young people who feel excluded, or on the edge of our society, taking part in some of these activities offer new opportunities and chances. These schemes can help us address, health issues, community safety, feelings of exclusion, crime and how to build stronger communities.

CASE STUDY

The annual Hertfordshire Youth Games sponsored by the British Airports Authority is a quality, multi-sport event held on a single day at Gosling Sports Park in Welwyn Garden City. Young people from across the county take part in this district team event. It provides a competitive outlet for young people at sub county level and promotes the value of sport to communities. It also

encourages partnership working between individuals and local sport development organisations.

The games encourage young people to continue to take part in other sporting activities through the creation of district and county based development programmes and projects. Whilst providing the opportunity for young people to improve their fitness and be a member of a team, it is also an excellent example of partnership working between the Districts, National Governing Bodies, Sport England and sport professionals in the county.

SNAPSHOT PROJECTS

- In an exciting project organised by East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council, the English Chamber Orchestra will visit six schools in rural East Herts, [Puckeridge, Buntingford and Ware] with a programme built around the music from the ballet Appalachian Springs. Children will be involved in playing music, composition, dance and visual arts. The work will culminate in a massed children's performance involving the schools' orchestras and choirs, and will include children who do not normally take part in regular music making.
- The School Link Scheme at Mill Green Museum was set up to encourage more school visits to the museum. A focus group of local primary teachers helped evaluate the existing education service and made recommendations for further areas of development. South Eastern Museums Service funded a training course to assist the Curator to develop a new Education Policy. This work has resulted in a rise in school visits allowing more children to experience what the museum has to offer.
- Xstream Street Dance has been developed by a partnership of organisations, including Hertsmere Borough Cultural Services, the Youth Service and local schools. The project provides young people with affordable dance sessions, in selected venues. These have been carefully chosen so that as many young people as possible can attend. They are encouraged to perform a variety of different dance styles and share their experiences.
- Get Animated was a two-day animation project for disabled and socially excluded groups such as young people in care, run by Theatre Resource. Supported and organised by Hertfordshire County Council it took place in Hatfield and involved participants taking part in creative writing, photography, music and dance, as part of Meltdown 2001, a series of six art projects funded through RALP.
- SNAP Theatre Company, based in Bishop's Stortford run local drama activities and visit schools, often using drama workshops to explore aspects of personal, social and health education with young people. They have received additional funding from the ACE Theatre Review in order to take a regional lead in the area of children and young people's theatre

- The Borough of Broxbourne are providing a purpose built Wheels park in Hoddesdon to give local young people a place to meet and socialise with their friends. It provides a safe place for them to enjoy a shared hobby and gives them a feeling of their own space. The park will include various size ramps and an informal play area with basketball hoops and a youth shelter
- The Coffee Mill Youth Project is a Youth Café that has been developed in an empty shop site in John Barker Place on the Westmill Estate in Hitchin. This is an area recognised as having relatively high levels of deprivation. The café is intended to be a safe and welcoming place for young people aged 13 plus to meet and socialise. The Coffee Mill provides a large number of agencies, such as the police, with a venue from which to target their youth work. The scheme has achieved a NHS Beacon Award and additional funding has been used to employ a project co-ordinator.
- The South Oxhey Community Campus is a development of a range of new and refurbished community leisure facilities. These include football pitches; multi-use games area [in partnership with Oxhey Jets Football Club]; refurbishment of Sir James Altham Swimming Pool; development of a new community building which will incorporate health and fitness, sports, the arts, cyber café, social activities and a purpose built youth wing. South Oxhey has received Single Regeneration Budget Funding and the new campus will aim to address many local and social issues in the area which include: high unemployment; a high percentage of young people and a low level of formal qualifications
- Hertfordshire County Council, in partnership with the Department of Health with the backing of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, created the sculpture project: 'Inside Out' for young people in public care. Nineteen young people took part and their ideas were brought to life with the help of sculptor Michael Condron. The finished work of seven full sized concrete sculptures is permanently installed at Burydale Children's Home in Stevenage. Inspired by visits to the Henry Moore Sculpture park and the Tate Modern, the sculptures were made by cutting, bending and welding steel skeletons which then had concrete built around them. Multi-coloured mosaic tiles were then applied to every sculpture. A solar-powered music player installed in the television sculpture plays music composed and performed by a member of the group.
- The National Youth Theatre in partnership with Watford Council's arts team, piloted free theatre skills workshops at Watford Football Club and a local community centre. These were well attended and enabled local young people to experience a taste of the theatre

ACTIVITIES

Enjoy! Message no 4

- **. Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by making Hertfordshire a more prosperous and attractive place to live and work.**

Hertfordshire has a flourishing film and tourism industry, both of which contribute greatly to the county's economy. To guarantee their future growth, for the economic benefit of us all, we need to ensure we have a strong cultural sector. An attractive environment with good facilities attracts companies to the county, especially one with good transport links and proximity to London. These combined with a high quality of life are considerations affecting companies decisions whether or not to move to the county. Strong cultural provision is a key indicator of such a quality of life. Large companies relocating to Hertfordshire strengthen the county's economy making it less dependent on London for employment

CASE STUDY

The film industry has long standing connections with Hertfordshire and a base of expertise that the local film commission office FilmLink has sought to exploit for the benefit of the local economy. Part of the ScreenEast Film Commission, based at the Leavesden Studio site, they are the single point of contact for film and television enquiries in Hertfordshire and recommend suitable locations across the whole East of England region. Hertfordshire is home to six studios and is a major UK centre for film and television. Hertfordshire is home to six studios and is a major UK centre for film and television. As an example, the mini series Band of Brothers, employed 700 staff many of them local. Through the purchase of goods and services, it contributed around £30 million to the local economy. FilmLink has been highly successful, attracting over a third of all films made in the UK to Hertfordshire during the last two years. This equates to £400 million of inward investment. Over ten thousand people are employed in the film. TV and media sector in the county. Supporting the clustering of knowledge-based businesses such as the film industry, is the best chance of bringing high value-added, sustainable job growth to the county.

SNAPSHOT PROJECTS

- The Great North Way cycle route runs up through the middle of Hertfordshire. The route is part of the national cycle network. It is being promoted as a major leisure route with themed circular rides through the countryside. The cycling map 'Literary Landscapes' links the route to our literary and historical connections and has been produced in partnership with the East of England Tourist Board. This Hertfordshire County Council led project was supported with resources secured from the EU KONVER

funding stream and SQ Environmental. The aim of the project is to encourage people to visit the area, enjoy the countryside and improve their health at the same time.

- 'Paint the Town', was a Culture in the Community project in Stevenage that gave residents of all ages in Shephall and Bedwell the opportunity to work together to create public works of arts assisted by professional artists. Stevenage Borough Council supported the project through their Single Regeneration Budget. The collective memories of some of the first people to live in the two neighbourhoods are reflected in the finished artworks of pebble mosaics. They provide a rich source of inspiration for current residents particularly for Stevenage's young people. Local residents created designs through a series of workshops and these were then incorporated into high quality works of arts displayed in neighbourhoods across the two neighbourhoods and in the town centre, reinforcing links between these areas. The project has helped create a stronger sense of community and has helped regenerate the area.
- In the original grand plan for Letchworth Garden City, the architects had designated the area now occupied by Kennedy Gardens as the Town Square. The restoration plans for the gardens, intend to reflect the growing vibrancy of the town, build on the heritage of the site, and achieve a real focal point for community activity, as was originally intended. The new designs allow much more intensive use of the site as a community venue for events and activities, with areas of hard standing, new tree planting, open space as a quiet place to sit and will include a landmark water fountain. This £1 million project offers significant opportunity for North Herts District Council and its partner, Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation to put in place a scheme that will benefit the community for many years to come.
- The Alban Way was once a railway line and is now a trail for cyclists and walkers. Linking St Albans and Hatfield, it is the perfect way to escape the busy roads. It is part of Hertfordshire's sustainable transport network and is part of the National Cycle Network. Future plans for the project include developing the trail as a walk and cycle way; enhancing the trails environmental conservation values and developing the educational and cultural value of the trail by introducing public art and interpretation panels. The project is a good example of partnership working, led by St Albans City and District Council, with other partners that include Welwyn Hatfield District Council, the Countryside Management Service and Groundwork [Hertfordshire]
- The vital role that tourism plays in the local economy means that we must ensure visitors to the county enjoy their visit and are offered value for money. East Herts District Council is working with their accommodation providers and their visitor attractions in the district and the East of England Tourist Board to establish a quality assurance scheme that will mean a recognised quality standard is achieved. This in turn will encourage

people to make return visits and will feed into the development of a Group Travel and Overseas marketing campaign

- Following the foot and mouth crisis, Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tourism Group has been leading on activities to promote Hertfordshire as a good place to visit. A familiarisation trip for twelve travel writers and group tour operators, led by Hertfordshire County Council has resulted in editorial promoting Hertfordshire as a tourist destination appearing as far afield as Kuala Lumpur and Australia. The East England Development Agency, Hertfordshire tourism providers and St Albans City and District Council supported the trip
- The Environment Fair held in Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead operates alongside Hemel Hempstead Carnival. The theme of the fair focuses on sustainable development and protection of the environment. It aims to increase awareness and understanding of a range of environmental topics and to empower the community to lead on local environment projects
- The Dacorum Community Safety Partnership has improved an area around Bennetts End Youth Club, which was experiencing a disproportionate level of crime and disorder. The work included replacement windows and doors, sensor lighting, conversion of a wasteland patch into an urban garden, murals and the installation of seating. This has resulted in reduced crime and vandalism and developed a sense of community pride and identity

ACTIVITIES

Enjoy! Message no 5

- **Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by valuing and supporting the diverse range of cultural and leisure activities enjoyed across the county.**

One of the things that the Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership is keen to encourage and support as wide a range of cultural activity in the county as possible. They want to provide the conditions that culture in all its forms and interests can flourish. That might mean you represent a small group be it an interest, ethnicity, age or area. The cultural strategy should help give you a framework so that you can see where your interests fit in and how you can access support when you need it.

CASE STUDY

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow is a project that culminated in the production of a historical documentary, which highlights and traces the settlement of the African Caribbean elders who have been resident in Stevenage over the last fifty years. It explores the impact this has had on their lives. The video traces the origins of the first generation families and highlights their experiences since arriving in Britain. The video includes interviews with many of the

original African Caribbean settlers and their families, who still live in Stevenage. The project was supported by Stevenage Borough Council, the East of England Development Agency and the Regional Arts Lottery Programme.

SNAPSHOT PROJECTS

- The Rainbow Festival in Watford organised by the local council attracts thousands of visitors of all ages and backgrounds, flocking to enjoy the varied range of entertainment on offer. From reggae and rap, to soca and salsa, the festival also includes puppet shows, arts and crafts, as well as a colourful carnival, featuring costumes designed and made by local community groups. It is an outstanding example of the community working in partnership with local business to celebrate and showcase the diverse talent the area has to offer
- Three Rivers District Council was awarded National Lottery Funding to redevelop Rickmansworth Public Golf Course and to develop a teaching academy to promote golf within the community particularly targeting women and young people. The improved facilities have enabled the council to improve its golf development programme in partnership with the Golf Foundation through their merit award scheme. The course has been given 'Starter Centre' status. The facilities are fully accessible by people with disabilities
- The Maltings Arts Theatre working in partnership with St Albans City and District Council have successfully bid for funding from the Regional Arts Lottery Programme. The cultural diversity project aims to raise awareness of the cultural diversity in the district and county by increasing access to the arts. It will celebrate these different cultures and aims to bring them together to enable a better understanding of a vibrant community. Phase one will be a series of music workshops for young Asians culminating in a performance at the St Albans Mela. Phase two will look to expand the programming at the Maltings Arts Theatre to include events of a more culturally diverse nature than at present and will include a mini festival. Phase three will be a World Music day for the St Albans Festival in 2004. The project will introduce people of all backgrounds to work and other cultures which they may not have otherwise experienced
- The House on the Sea drama group performed 'Turned Out Nice Again' at day centres in the county. The production is aimed at working with the elderly to stimulate their memories and reminiscences and encourages the audience to actively take part through songs.
- The Community Together Forum in Hemel Hempstead hold two events on a biannual basis that highlight and celebrate the cultural diversity across the Borough. One is a presentation on 'Caring about Minority Cultural Communities in Dacorum' which outlines feedback from the local communities and shares ideas for developing initiatives. The other is a one day celebration of music, dance and carnival parade that includes

workshops and displays from around the world. This provides an opportunity for the local communities to experience different cultural activities

ACTIVITIES

Enjoy! Message no 6

- **Enhance the quality of life for people living in Hertfordshire by working in partnership with national, regional and local agencies to deliver a range of cultural and leisure activities effectively.**

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership wants to be able to take advantage of the economic and funding opportunities offered by regional and national developments. This means the work in Hertfordshire will fit into the greater picture and contribute to it. Often the way to do this is to work in partnership as this brings the widest range of experience and support to a service or project. Of equal importance is the fact that partnership working is often the means by which funding can be unlocked. Cultural provision and activities often help the regeneration of less prosperous or disadvantaged areas as demonstrated in Stevenage during a recent public art project.

CASE STUDY

Trestle Arts Base

Trestle is an internationally renowned, mask touring company. Over the last twenty years they have established an excellent reputation for their artistic work and education programme. At the end of May this year they opened a permanent base offering training facilities and resource centre in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The Trestle Arts Base, in a restored derelict chapel at the old Cell Barnes Hospital site, will make a real difference in the local community, making the arts accessible to all.

The building incorporates a stunning 80-seat studio theatre, rehearsal and meeting rooms, studio workshops, a resource library free to users and an attractive coffee bar. It will house exciting art based activities [including a youth theatre], for all ages and abilities. In addition Trestle offers innovative training schemes, including those to business. WPP [the UK's biggest marketing conglomerate] is amongst many organisations taking advantage of the training we offer in personal development, body language and teamwork.

This £2 million project succeeded in securing Hertfordshire's largest Arts Council of England Capital Lottery Award [£1.5 million] towards it. The project involved partnership between Trestle, Hertfordshire County Council, St Albans City and District Council, The Highfield Park Trust and the wider arts and business community in the county. It also had support from East England Arts, East of England Development Agency and The Sylvia Adams Trust.

Now the Arts Base is open, Trestle faces the twin challenges of ensuring its facilities are fully utilised by the local and wider Hertfordshire communities and

finding sufficient income for its long term running costs. However the Trestle Arts Base is a magnificent achievement both for the Theatre Company, Hertfordshire and the Region as a whole, proving once again the value of partnership.

SNAPSHOT PROJECTS

- Hertfordshire County Council's Community Information, Libraries take part in the national summer reading challenge. Children of all ages read 10 books of their choice and comment them and those completing the challenge receive a certificate. As well as being enjoyable and providing children with something to do through the holidays, the scheme has the benefit of helping to maintain children's reading skills through the summer break. This year it is intended to further expand the scheme to 10-13 year olds. There will also be an extension of the use of Millennium Volunteers in connection with the scheme. The scheme will be particularly targeted at the county's looked after children.
- Active Sports is a national programme, supported by Sport England that aims to meet the demand of taking young people who play sport into a club and competition environment. The Hertfordshire Active Sports Partnership, made up of the districts, the County Council, the University of Hertfordshire and six sports governing bodies, provides locally based activities across the county which are delivered by the districts working closely with local clubs, coaches and schools. Sports in phase one are: netball, tennis, rugby and cricket, with basketball and girls' football being tackled in phase two
- Herts Dance is the vibrant new dance agency for Hertfordshire. With initial funding from an East England Arts Regional Arts Lottery Programme [RALP] award, Hertfordshire County Council and the Districts and Borough Councils, the agency will support and develop dance opportunities across the county.
Herts Dance seeks to develop a broad understanding and appreciation of dance by supporting the growth of dance culture, which promotes both quality and accessibility.
It will also publicise more widely the broad range of dance activities already taking place in schools and community venues. Currently working on its first year of events, the Agency plans include the continuation of relationships with professional companies from outside the region as well as supporting work by local artists
- Hertsmere Inclusive Theatre Project has been set up as a result of a successful school project that was set up in partnership with Chicken Shed Theatre Company. It aims to provide and organise inclusive theatre groups as an out of school activity for children and young people aged 7 to 16 years. Regular terms of classes are in place. The project also provides older students and local volunteers with training to allow them to continue the work of the project in the future. Tumbleweed Theatre Company is the

artistic directors of the project. Other partners are East England Arts and Hertfordshire County Council and local businesses.

- 'Extreme Adventure' offer young people from across Dacorum Borough Council the opportunity to take part in adventure sports and alternative activities. Based at the Hertfordshire Young Mariners Base in Cheshunt, they can learn new skills in: climbing, caving, circus skills and DJ mixing to name just a few. The project allows the young people to develop their social and personal skills while gaining new experiences. This is a partnership project between Dacorum Borough Council and the County Youth Service.
- Digswell Archive Project is a partnership between Digswell Arts Trust, The University of Hertfordshire and HALS. Currently the Digswell archives are deposited with HALS but no detailed work has been done on their contents. The project will properly document these and will be followed by a PhD research project. The work will culminate in a book about the history of this distinguished arts trust, established in 1957. Ex-fellows of the Trust include the painter Graham Arnold and sculptor John W Mills. It is intended that the project will be supported by a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Hertfordshire Association of Cultural Officers [HACO] is a strategic partnership made up of the ten district councils, Hertfordshire County Council, Sport England, East England Arts and the University of Hertfordshire. The group meets four times a year. It's main aim is to champion the provision, management and development of cultural and leisure services for all communities in the county. The group provides effective representation and lobbying for on behalf of all Hertfordshire cultural services at regional and national level.
- The East England Arts [EEA] Hertfordshire area plan developed from partnership working between the Hertfordshire local authorities and East England Arts. It is intended to run for a year, followed by assessment and revision to develop new priority areas or partners for the following year. Those highlighted will be a particular focus for EEA. The current plan identifies working with SNAP Theatre Company and Trestle Theatre Company. Watford Council, North Herts District Council and Stevenage Borough Council are all working closely with EEA. The focus of this work is to encourage a successful Lottery bid in order to develop an aspect of the arts locally. The area plan will support emerging county strategies, including the Youth Arts Strategy.
- The Youth Arts Strategy was drawn up by a group of arts development officers, on behalf of the Hertfordshire Arts Partnership, in a broad consultation with young people. The strategy will help develop partnerships between the organisers and providers of youth arts over the next three years. It will be reviewed at the end of March each year, followed by an agreement to plan and develop the following year's work.

Future Plans and Priorities

The following six priority areas reflect the feedback from the public consultation. These are the areas that the Hertfordshire Cultural partnership will be focussing on over the next five years.

Enjoy! Priority no1: More young people Involved in activities

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will:

- work with schools and other partners to encourage young people to take part in cultural and leisure activities
- promote the benefits of taking part in cultural and leisure activities to all young people
- ensure that all groups of young people have the opportunity to input into Community Plans
- promote the use of cultural and leisure activities as a way to build, unite and improve local communities

Enjoy! Priority no 2: Explore ways of improving public transport to facilities/events

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will:

- encourage residents to participate in cultural and leisure activities in their local community through better information provision
- encourage all cultural providers to include information on how to reach the event by public transport in their promotions
- work with transport providers to enable people to access a wider range of cultural and leisure activities
- actively encourage people to make use of public or shared transport when attending a cultural or leisure activity

Enjoy! Priority no 3: Organisations working together to improve equal access to cultural and leisure activities

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will:

- promote HertsDirect as a source of information on how people can access cultural and leisure activities in Hertfordshire
- work with organisations to help inform them about funding so they can contribute to the growth of the cultural sector and increase the amount of Lottery funding awarded to Hertfordshire
- work with organisations to identify gaps in cultural and leisure provision in Hertfordshire to help plan for the future
- work together to ensure that local cultural and leisure needs are considered when planning improvements for local communities
- work together to provide equal access to cultural and leisure activities for all young people

Enjoy! Priority no 4: Activities to improve people's mental and physical health and welfare

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will:

- promote the health benefits of physical and cultural activities to all age groups
- promote existing and new opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy an active outdoor lifestyle in the Hertfordshire countryside
- work with partners to make better use of existing facilities ensuring access to activities for all sections of the community
- work together with health providers and other agencies to harness cultural and leisure provision to support and improve health and well being

Enjoy! Priority no 5: More learning opportunities for all

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will:

- promote libraries as a source of learning opportunities and information
- promote equality of access to learning for life for all sections of the community
- exploit information and communication technology to support learning and improve cultural and leisure services
- promote the benefits of life long learning
- work with partners and voluntary groups to identify funding to support life long learning

Enjoy! Priority no 6: Develop a greater understanding of the social and economic impact of cultural and leisure activities on communities

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will:

- research the economic impact of cultural and leisure activities on the local economy
- commission value and volume data on the impact of tourism to the local economy
- identify what is missing locally to help plan for the future
- explore the use of regeneration schemes to improve cultural and leisure facilities, especially in low income areas
- work in partnership to explore potential sources of National and European funding
- through community planning involve local people in the planned improvement of their locality
- use cultural and leisure activities to encourage a sense of pride in local communities

The appendix at the back of this booklet outlines the Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership's future activities that will support these priorities.

The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this strategy. If you would like further information about this document, additional copies or a copy in large print or on tape please call 01438 737555.