



CULTURE AND VISITOR ECONOMY

SUB-GROUP

ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

FEBRUARY 2020

Contents

Foreword.....	3
Section 1 - Introduction	4
Section 2 – The Context	6
Section 3 – The needs for arts and cultural provision in Oxfordshire’s growth towns	9
Section 4 – Developing collaboration and partnerships through county-wide services	16
Section 5 – The Cultural Education Partnerships.....	19
Section 6 – Moving forward	21

Foreword

Access to and engagement with a wide variety of excellent arts and culture provision, and opportunities for people of all ages and in all social and economic circumstances to develop and express their creativity, lie at the heart of Arts Council England’s new Strategy for the next decade “*Lets Create*”. ACE is working with Local Enterprise Partnerships across the country to implement that vision, and I am delighted to see the commitment of the Oxfordshire LEP to integrate cultural development within its ambitious plans for economic development, and the associated growth plans for its main communities.

The OxLEP Strategic Framework for Arts and Culture recognises the vital importance of local cultural provision in the creation of strong communities and places where people want to live and work. The substantial growth of new housing across the county that is a key part of the Oxfordshire 2050 Spatial Plan brings with it the need to integrate the provision of social and cultural space into new residential areas. ACE can offer its support and guidance to the LEP, the local authorities and cultural provider in securing these spaces, and is seeking to foster new partnerships between the extensive and successful range of arts and cultural organisations that exist in Oxfordshire.

The OxLEP Local Industrial Strategy identifies the creative industries as a major development sector for the county from its current strong base and recent growth track record. Providing opportunities for young people to be creative and to acquire the skills that provide the basis for future employment opportunities is a vital part of this Framework document. Placemaking, personal growth and self-discovery are bound together as the outputs from a vibrant arts and culture sector.

Arts Council England warmly welcomes OxLEP’s vision for the future and we look forward to working closely with the LEP and with all our cultural partners to realise that vision.

Hedley Swain

Area Director South East, Arts Council England

Section 1 - Introduction

1. Arts Council England provided financial support to OxLEP for the development of a cultural strategy for Oxfordshire in 2015/16. The recommendations from the consultants' report, which was based on extensive research and consultation with arts and culture bodies across the county, were summarised in the Delivery Plan for the Local Enterprise Partnership's Culture and Visitor Economy Sub-Group (CVESG). This was approved in February 2018. Its remit is summarised in this introductory paragraph.

'The cultural and creative industries, heritage and tourism play an important role in the county by generating jobs, contributing to innovation and competitiveness, and making the county a place where people want to live and work. There is considerable scope for making better use of our creative, cultural and heritage assets. A strategic approach to supporting their development and sustainability will enhance the contribution they make to the county's economic and social development'

2. The CVESG Vision Statement sets out its aspirations for the role that arts and culture will play in the development of the county's economy and its communities. This Strategic Framework seeks to fulfil two key elements in the Vision Statement:
 - *'To ensure that new and emerging arts, cultural.....projects offer communities across the county opportunities to enhance their wellbeing, learn new skills, retrain and increase access to employment.*
 - *To ensure that the county's arts and culturalagenda is fully integrated within economic plans, place-making and community development through the planning system in line with the county's growth agenda'*
3. The CVESG Delivery Plan has four priority themes, which have been integrated into this Strategic Framework and into an underpinning analysis of the opportunities facing Oxfordshire over the coming decades. The aim of this Framework is to:
 - Create productive and engaging experiences for people of all ages
 - Develop people's skills and talents, and support business growth
 - Foster creative place-making
 - Promote collaboration between arts and culture organisations across the county

The County Arts and Culture Network Group which has developed this Framework has adopted the following remit:

‘To develop the County’s arts and cultural assets, and to support the placemaking imperatives deriving from the growth of the population, as well as tourism and the visitor economy, and the contribution that they make to health, well-being and educational achievement’.

Section 2 – The Context

- 4. The Joint Strategic Spatial Plan:** The six Oxfordshire local authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership were successful in securing a Housing and Growth Deal with Government in November 2017. Under the terms of that agreement, they are committed to producing a Joint Strategic Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire for submission to the Planning Inspectorate by 31 March 2020.

The JSSP Scoping Document was approved in October 2018, and sets out the policy context, structure and evidence base for the Plan. It includes a commitment to the development of strong and healthy communities, and to the development of good social infrastructure alongside the construction of new homes. However, there is no reference to arts and cultural facilities as forming an important component of social and community infrastructure. As part of the work on this Strategic Framework, a range of important opportunities for arts and cultural provision have been identified and should be considered to form part of the JSSP plans for future housing, transport and employment developments

- 5. The Local Industrial Strategy:** The LEP and the six local authorities have developed a Local Industrial Strategy under the aegis of the Government’s National Industrial Strategy. This was approved by Government in July 2019, and the LEP is now tasked with developing propositions which will be submitted to government to carry forward key aspects of the Strategy. The Local Industrial Strategy sets out the way in which the county’s economic potential can be realised over the next decade and beyond.
- 6.** In parallel, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the six local authorities are working with a large group of local authorities and LEPs on plans for the future economic and spatial development of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. In both the Local Industrial Strategy and the wider ‘Arc’ discussions, placemaking and good social infrastructure are recognised as key components of ‘good growth’, which are expected to be integrated into forward strategic planning.
- 7.** Arts and culture are powerful forces for nurturing identity and confidence, bringing communities together, and creating a sense of place and shared ambition. This Strategic Framework identifies key priorities for the county for the next decade of growth and development, which will provide economic benefit and help to build healthy communities. Taken together, the Local Industrial Strategy and the JSSP set out an ambitious vision for Oxfordshire over the next two decades. This Strategic Framework seeks to complement that economic and spatial vision, with a vision for a

quality of life which includes an inclusive range of arts and cultural opportunities. It is not intended to be a programmatic delivery plan, with specific time frames attached, as none of the partners involved controls the financial and decision-making levers that would be necessary to do this. At this stage, there can be no certainty about the availability of either capital or recurrent resources to realise the overall vision or specific individual projects. Its role is to provide a framework within which public authority stakeholders, and arts and cultural organisations, can collaborate to realise the aspirations and objectives that are identified. It is intended to be a living document that will be refined and extended by contributions from stakeholders and community groups over time.

8. The first section of the Framework focuses on the key communities that will be seeing substantial population expansion over the next decade; the second section covers some of the main collaborative opportunities for the arts and cultural institutions in the county as their contribution to the twin goals of a buoyant economy and strong communities.

The Framework has adopted five cross cutting aspirations for the creation of inclusive cultural spaces for the people of Oxfordshire. We want our cultural spaces to:

- contribute to the health and well-being of local communities and support people to lead fulfilling lives
 - facilitate community cohesion and promote social justice
 - contribute to educational provision in their communities, complementing the work that takes place in schools, colleges and skills providers.
 - create opportunities for people of all ages to experience arts and cultural activities which provide enjoyment, the development of personal skills and creativity
 - be appropriately resourced to ensure that they are used effectively and secure the community benefits that are intended.
9. These five themes are based on the three outcomes proposed by Arts Council England for the Ten-Year Strategy for 2020-30, which will guide the Council's funding decisions over that period.

Creative People: To get more people of all ages and all backgrounds to take part in activities which allow them to be creative. To widen the talent pool and work with the education sector to foster creative potential.

Cultural Communities: To place arts and culture at the heart of building strong and inclusive communities by building partnerships between cultural organisations and other community stakeholders.

A Creative and Cultural Country: To promote new ways of creating and sharing culture across art forms and to promote the opening- up of museum and library collections through modern management techniques.

Section 3 – The needs for arts and cultural provision in Oxfordshire’s growth towns

10. DIDCOT

There has been substantial housing and employment growth in Didcot over the past 20 years. Milton Park has developed into a major economic hub with a strong science orientation, and there are exciting plans for a major development by Rebellion to build a film and video production facility on the Park, that will offer employment opportunities in the creative industry sector.

Cultural facilities have been developed in and around the Cornerstone Arts Centre in the town centre. The future plans for the Didcot Garden Town, and for further significant housing expansion are at an early stage, but it is important that the provision for further community space, and arts and culture facilities which match the needs of this growing population should be discussed and agreed as an integral part of the planning process.

Three project themes are proposed as part of these forward plans:

- The role and future funding for the Cornerstone Centre should be determined, in order to place it on a sustainable long-term basis. A key consideration is its potential as a physical space that could accommodate a wide range of collaborative activities with other arts and culture organisations across Oxfordshire and Berkshire. ‘Outreach’ activities from, for example, the University of Oxford’s museums and libraries, the Oxfordshire County Council’s Museum and Libraries Services, the Oxford Playhouse, Modern Art Oxford, Pegasus Youth Theatre and Film Oxford could all find a place in an extended programme at the Cornerstone. The potential size of Didcot’s population in 10/15 years’ time and the potential for a wide range of collaborative opportunities may require an expansion of the Centre.
- The potential for developing the ‘arts and sciences’ link between Didcot and the Harwell Campus (and potentially, also, the Milton Park Estate) should be explored
- The development of an arts and cultural facility in the Didcot Garden Town development, including library and museum services, is a vital element for the planning process. With an appropriate building, this facility should be conceived and developed as an important community arts hub that can also support collaborative and touring work.

11. BICESTER

Like Didcot, there has already been significant housing growth at Bicester, and the success of Bicester Village as a major retail destination and global brand has been phenomenal. Substantial further growth in the population of Bicester is planned for the coming decade, alongside the further expansion of Bicester Village, new employment sites and the development of a new rail link to Bedford and Milton Keynes. The future shape and spatial distribution of homes and jobs across the Arc has still to be determined, but on any likely scenario, Bicester will be an important component of the Arc's western sector.

This exciting future clearly calls for significant investment in community based arts and culture provision, and there have already been initiatives involving the District Council, the Arts Council and other county arts organisations to improve the range of activities for the people of the town. A Task Force has been developing plans for the regeneration of the town centre, and Wolf Resorts have published plans to convert the Chesterton Country Club and Golf Course into a major water based holiday resort.

Current provision: The Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership has been working with young people in Bicester for more than a decade and recently took over the former St Edburg's Primary School site on a temporary lease. OYAP have developed the site into a heavily used community and arts centre, StudioO2, providing opportunities for dance, visual arts, sculpture, projects for vulnerable young people, for Age UK activities and for MIND. As a unique space for a wide variety of local arts practitioners, it has also proved to be a valuable 'drop-in' space for young people. The recent conversion of the former school hall provides a small auditorium for drama and music performances.

Three project themes are proposed:

- A community of Bicester's current and future size clearly warrants the establishment of a dedicated arts and culture venue. The plans for significant reshaping of the town centre provide the opportunity to identify a suitable location for that venue. This might involve a development on the OYAP Studio O2 site, or in another location if that is not assessed as being appropriately positioned to serve an increasingly widespread community. In either case, OYAP's experience and reputation for delivering projects which strengthen community engagement makes it uniquely well placed to inform discussions about the town's future cultural provision. It is also well placed to help broker partnerships with other arts and cultural providers, and to integrate its current programmes into the future offer. The major capital and revenue implications of this project will require collaboration and partnership between funders, recognising that OYAP currently has no core funding.

- The development of the Bicester Heritage site may also provide an appropriate location to provide for arts and culture activities to serve local needs, beyond those proposed for the planned museum. The site clearly has great potential to support the county's visitor economy and to offer excellent opportunities for skills development.
- The successful collaboration between the Bicester community and the Mill Arts Centre in Banbury provides a good model for future cultural provision in the area. Opportunities for similar partnership working should be considered with the wide range of arts and cultural institutions in Oxford (the University Museums, the Oxford Playhouse, Modern Art Oxford etc)

The Arts Council provided funding to support partnership working in Bicester, with OYAP acting as a conduit. There is clearly scope for the early development of further projects to support talent development, placemaking and the improvement of wellbeing. Links with the Healthy New Town project should be consolidated and the learning from the project applied more widely cross the county.

12. WITNEY

Witney is the largest community in West Oxfordshire. It is a largely rural district but has some of the nation's best known heritage assets, which play a key role in the Oxfordshire visitor economy. Blenheim Palace, Burford and the Oxfordshire Cotswolds are major attractions for national and international visitors. The area is dotted with many small craft enterprises, run by independent sole-traders, incorporating local work spaces and small galleries. The rural nature of the area means that many people are reliant on cars to access the services that are based in the larger towns, such as Witney and Chipping Norton.

In Witney town centre, several public buildings are located in the area opposite the recently developed Marriotts Walk shopping centre. They include the County Council Library, a campus of Abingdon and Witney College, the Nuffield Health Centre, the former Magistrates court, the Fire Station and the Police Station. This range of current uses and the current configuration of their buildings, suggests that there is an opportunity to reimagine the way these services are delivered in the future which might also provide the basis for the development of integrated public and cultural services for Witney and the neighbouring area. This could form part of a One Public Estate project.

Witney is poorly served with cultural and creative spaces. There is no Arts Centre, although the Corn Exchange in Market Square, owned by the Town Council, was recently refurbished and provides a small but attractive space for community activities. It is managed as a hall for hire, and currently has no regular professional creative programming. It would require further upgrading to accommodate theatre

and dance productions, and the Town Council have expressed interest in pursuing this option.

Witney is already of sufficient size to sustain a greater level of arts and cultural infrastructure, and this will be increasingly the case as new housing comes on stream and employment grows. The development of a designated space to provide a focus for arts and culture activities in the town is a priority. This space could provide a base for other complementary services and act as a hub for outreach programmes, such as the District Council's successful 2- year pilot arts and health programme based at Witney Community Hospital. This could be extended to other community hospitals across Oxfordshire, as part of a wider programme of arts prescribing.

Cogges Farm in Witney is managed through a charitable Trust, and provides both a small scale visitor attraction and an educational function for local schools and community groups. With additional funding, both functions could be enhanced.

13. CHIPPING NORTON

Chipping Norton is located in the north of the county near the Warwickshire and Gloucestershire borders, and the town provides a local centre for a number of large villages in the neighbouring area.

It is home to The Theatre, Chipping Norton, which is the only professional arts space in West Oxfordshire. The Theatre is largely funded through fundraising and earned income, with some grant support from the District Council.

The Theatre is a producing and presenting house operating at the small scale. It occupies a site in the centre of the town and for some time has been exploring opportunities to acquire additional space in the town. This would enable it to deliver a more extensive participation programme, a film programme and a catering service. This would also allow greater flexibility in the use of the main space and enable a wider range of people to engage with the Theatre.

New housing is planned for Chipping Norton, and as part of the planning requirements for major developments, the Council has been securing contributions towards Public Art which have been used to develop creative spaces for young people and families.

14. EYNSHAM AND CARTERTON

Eynsham: The Area Action Plan for a Garden Village at Eynsham is out to consultation but there is no acknowledgement currently of any prospective requirements for arts and community infrastructure. While its location close to Oxford, and the ease of access to the city, means that large scale provision is unlikely to be appropriate, it is

important to consider the scope for local arts provision for local residents, and accessible creative spaces particularly for children and young people and those more elderly residents who may not be able, or wish, to travel into the city. Future wellbeing strategies for the county are likely to be centred around access to local community based activities to combat loneliness and support extended active lives, and these should be incorporated into the Area Action Plan vision.

Carterton: Carterton is West Oxfordshire's second largest settlement. It has already grown significantly and further growth is planned. Its population profile differs from the rest of West Oxfordshire as young people and families make up a much larger proportion of the community than elsewhere due to the large numbers of service personnel who live in Brize Norton and in Carterton itself.

There is currently no creative infrastructure in the town, but the Library, the Community College, the Family Centre and the Leisure Centre provide a basis for the development of future collaborative and innovative provision for the growing population. The development of a flexible, multi-use space in which community arts programmes could be nurtured would complement these other community owned organisations and would be of great value in supporting the expected population growth. In Carterton, as elsewhere, the need for a dedicated human resource to support the development of community provision is a key requirement.

Space for creative activities: Across West Oxfordshire, and elsewhere in the county, there are many creative workers who are based in a home environment but would like to have access to a shared space where they could meet other creative workers, share ideas and resources and skills. Opportunities to take on empty commercial space and offer it to groups of workers in the creative industries should be identified and supported.

15. BANBURY

The population of Banbury will soon reach 50,000, and the town has a thriving business community including aerospace, food manufacturing, and motor vehicle technology companies. The town centre is a Business Investment District.

The Mill Arts Centre provides a strong base for arts and culture provision in Banbury. It was recently transferred from local authority control to become a charitable trust, and recent decisions by Cherwell District Council to provide sustained funding support for the Mill, have confirmed its long term future as a major arts venue for North Oxfordshire and the adjoining parts of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

On the basis of a new 25-year lease from the District Council and an agreed capital scheme to update the facilities, the Mill is planning to expand its programme and its reach – including a year-round programme in Bicester for families and young people,

and a Dance Festival in Banbury. The Council's revenue budget supports the theatre's activities.

Two future project themes have been identified:

- To provide the scale and range of arts and culture activities that are appropriate for the expansion of the local population, there will need to be a Phase 2 of the Mill's modernisation project to create a 400 seat auditorium.
- The potential for collaborative initiatives with the Banbury Museum, many of the Oxford- based arts and culture organisations, and the County Council's museum and library services should be explored.
- The Banbury Museum is also a charitable trust and is currently completing a major refurbishment. The new Pye Gallery provides an international- standard exhibition space, and there is clearly potential for collaboration between the Gallery and other visual art institutions within Oxfordshire and elsewhere (eg Modern Art Oxford, Milton Keynes Gallery, Warwick University Arts Centre)
- The Light Cinema is due to open soon adjacent to the Mill Arts Centre and the Banbury Museum. This will provide a third element in a new cultural quarter for Banbury.

16. ABINGDON

Abingdon School's 400-seat Amey Theatre is used occasionally for public events and performances. It has recently been refurbished and there is potential for it to be used more extensively for bought-in productions for the general public, but the demand for the space from within the school means that it is unlikely to become a genuinely public cultural asset.

The small Unicorn Theatre (90 seats), located in the old Abbey Buildings, is owned by The Friends of Abingdon and is used for small scale theatre productions and film shows. It is well patronised, and the Friends are working towards an extensive modernisation project for these important heritage buildings that would include a major upgrading of the theatre facilities. This could also provide for a range of other arts and culture activities, including the visual arts and dance. The Friends have discussed the project with OxLEP with a view to securing support for the capital cost, and a large HLF bid is in preparation.

However, to provide for the full range of arts and culture activities that would be appropriate for the large Abingdon community, particularly for young people, it is vital that an early analysis is undertaken of the existing limited provision and the future local needs of the town. This would provide a basis for planning the scale, character and location of future provision.

17. HENLEY ON THAMES

Henley is a relatively small town, and is not facing a period of significant new housing growth, but it does serve as a focal point, providing services for a wide area in southern Oxfordshire and northern parts of Berkshire. It is well provided with arts and culture facilities and venues, and these attract visitors nationally and internationally throughout the year.

Henley describes itself as the Town of Festivals – these include an annual Literary Festival, Arts Festival, the Rewind 80s Music Festival, the Brakspear Festival and the Henley Fringe. Alongside the well-known River and Rowing Museum, there is an Arts Trail incorporating nine private galleries, and the Barn Gallery in nearby Aston.

The principal development need in the town is funding to modernise the 205 year old Kenton Theatre, reputedly the fourth oldest theatre in the country. A fundraising campaign, ‘Kenton for Keeps’, is under way. The theatre offers a varied programme of drama, comedy, dance and variety, and is clearly a major asset for the area which deserves to be brought up to contemporary standards to support and encourage local creative groups.

Section 4 – Developing collaboration and partnerships through county-wide services

18. THE OXFORDSHIRE MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES SERVICE

Oxfordshire County Council’s Libraries Service is a major component in placemaking and in building communities and local identity. The Service operates across the county and provides services which are local and inclusive. Future development of the Service is being planned to include a range of programmes and services which will foster the role of libraries as a focal point for community activity, as has already happened in some locations in Oxfordshire, as well as in many other areas across the country.

The Oxfordshire Museums Service is planning to work alongside the libraries to offer a programme of pop- up exhibitions in library spaces and other cultural and public locations. The spaces that are available in libraries will also provide opportunities for links with other arts and cultural bodies as the basis for more extensive work in local communities and with schools and community groups.

These strategic developments in the two county-wide services could make an important contribution to the scale of provision in all the cultural and community spaces that are created in the county’s growing communities, and will offer the opportunity to foster strong links with schools and other educational institutions across the county.

19. UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD – GARDENS, LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS (GLAM)

The University’s gardens, libraries and museums are funded as an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation to work extensively with communities across the county. GLAM community ambassadors facilitate events and programmes for groups living outside the city both at the museums and at local venues. There is enormous scope for developing these services further, and a strong wish on the part of the University to do so. They could make a unique and very rich contribution to the range of cultural experiences that are on offer in those parts of the county where current provision is limited.

GLAM has recently built a partnership with the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences in the University, to explore how gardens, libraries, museums and arts organisations can contribute to promote health and well-being. The

partnership aims to support the sharing of knowledge and practice between academics, clinicians, policymakers, cultural professionals and relevant stakeholders, to raise public awareness of the potential for social prescribing initiatives, and to promote initiatives in this type of provision in partnership with local authorities, the health services and arts organisations.

Their work aims to identify and develop ways of delivering this type of provision by collaborative research that will improve the evidence base and support the implementation and evaluation of initiatives to promote health and well-being in different environments.

The link between arts and public health is developing in many parts of the country, and in Oxfordshire this initiative by the University sits alongside the Healthy New Towns projects in Bicester and Barton(Oxford).The lessons from the Healthy New Towns initiative need to be taken on board through the JSSP process, and incorporated into the planning of the growth towns and the new housing developments that are expected to occur over the next two decades. They provide the potential for a county wide revolution in public health provision based in arts and cultural institutions.

20. OXFORD PLAYHOUSE

The Oxford Playhouse provides a high-class theatre, dance and comedy programme and draws in its audiences from across the county and beyond. It is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation and offers a very extensive outreach and education programme, including its summer ‘Playhouse Plays Out’ programme which tours to venues in different parts of the county. In 2019 the programme took place for two weeks in Banbury and most performances were in communities outside Oxford. There is potential to expand this programme but funding constraints have prevented this happening.

The Playhouse’s wider outreach programme has great potential for expansion with appropriate funding and this could open up theatre experiences to young people across Oxfordshire. As we suggest in the following sections, partnerships between Oxford-based arts organisations could be the basis for a long-term programme of arts and cultural developments across the county.

21. OTHER ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANISATIONS BASED IN OXFORD

Several other Arts Council England NPOs are located in Oxford: Modern Art Oxford, Oxford Contemporary Music, Pegasus Youth Theatre, and the Story Museum. In addition a number of other well-established Oxford-based arts and cultural organisations have been supported through Arts Council project grants : Arts at the

Old Fire Station, Film Oxford, the Cowley Road Carnival, Ark-T, Mandala Theatre, Dancin' Oxford, OVADA and Fusion Arts, are the leading examples.

All these organisations have worked at some point outside the city, collaborating with local organisations and in local venues, and the potential for developing that aspect of their work is undoubtedly substantial. If the appropriate funding were available to support the artistic leaders and the resources required, there is the potential for an extensive programme of long-term partnership work between these Oxford based organisations and schools, youth clubs and local community groups across the county.

The Arts Council's Ten- Year Strategy places great emphasis on collaboration between funded bodies and there is a clear role for the Arts and Culture Network to provide the impetus to develop collaboration across the county and to promote skill-sharing and skill-swaps.

Collaborations and joint working are key to supporting new provision for the growing population of Oxfordshire and the development of skills for the creative and cultural industries. These collaborations could also provide an appropriate vehicle for providing arts and cultural apprenticeships, and for supporting the development of small-scale social enterprises with an arts and culture basis.

Section 5 – The Cultural Education Partnerships

22. A nascent example of the potential for cross-county and cross-sector collaboration is the development of the Cultural Education Partnerships that have been established in Oxford and in North Oxfordshire. These Partnerships are part of the national Cultural Education Challenge which seeks to create strategic partnerships to unite, share resources and improve cultural education for children and young people. They link education with arts and cultural organisations and artists, with high-level support from leaders and decision-makers in their area.

23. The vision informing these Partnerships is ambitious:

- To enable every child and young person to have the opportunity to take part , create and influence high quality arts and culture, so that they become lifelong engagers, producers and audiences in arts and culture.
- To enable them to become role models and local leaders for the next generation of young people.
- To develop a collaborative and sustainable infrastructure to maintain such engagement placing emphasis on the voice of young people to be central to the process.
- To focus on children and young people who have less access to cultural activities and who reflect the full diversity of the local community

However, the resources currently available to deliver such an extensive ambition are limited. The Oxford CEP has a budget of £170k to support its work over a two-year period, following an initial £10k start-up grant from Artsworld, the ACE bridge organisation for the South East.

24. The current projects within the CEP programme are:

- Schools Connect: Ten primary schools are involved in music making with Oxford Contemporary Music, or storytelling with Kuumba Nia Arts, with the wider objective of embedding arts within the curriculum through Arts Awards for pupils, and professional development for teachers. Alongside, there is a youth ambassador programme in each school.
- Early Years: Led by Dancin’ Oxford, in partnership with Oxford Brookes University, to explore the role of creativity in child development with a particular focus on children from BAME and less well-off families.

- Young people not engaging with education: In partnership with organisations in Bicester and Banbury, seeking to provide life skills through the arts and providing progression into apprenticeships and training.
25. The two CEPs are working together to draw up plans for the future focussing on fundraising and governance, with the aspiration of creating a sustainable county wide Partnership to realise the vision described in paragraph 22.

Section 6 – Moving forward

26. Oxfordshire is rich in arts and cultural resources, but they do not reach and involve as many people as they should. In particular, children and young people experience uneven access to opportunities to express themselves through creative activities as they are growing up. As the Local Industrial Strategy and the Joint Spatial Plan indicate, community well-being through good social provision is a key objective for the county over the coming decades of growth and economic change. Arts and culture are an important part of that social provision, alongside provision for physical activity, community self-organisation, education and health services. The recent Durham Commission report focussed on the intrinsic value of promoting creativity throughout educational and arts programmes, and Oxfordshire’s future growth puts the county in a good position to apply the conclusions from that important report.
27. The arts and cultural institutions of Oxfordshire are also an important part of the county’s economy and in particular, of the visitor economy. The University of Oxford’s three major museums, together with the Bodleian Library and the Botanic Garden, make an enormous contribution to the attractiveness of Oxford as a tourist venue. Modern Art Oxford, the Oxford Playhouse, the Mill in Banbury, the River and Rowing Museum in Henley, Cogges Farm, and many other cultural institutions draw in visitors from other parts of the country as well as from abroad. The new Story Museum building will shortly add a further visitor attraction to this list.
28. The aim of this Strategic Framework is to identify and describe the ways in which the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Oxfordshire Growth Board, the local authorities and the arts and culture community across Oxfordshire can work together to secure the objectives set out in the CVESG Delivery Plan :

‘...to make better use of Oxfordshire’s creative, cultural and heritage assets through a strategic approach to supporting their development and sustainability that will enhance their contribution to the county’s economic and social development’

We have identified three main areas for future action:

- to stimulate new collaborations between the existing network of providers.
- to lever in additional resources (particularly capital) to meet the placemaking obligations that arise from the growth of the county as envisaged in the Housing and Growth Deal.
- to support the further development of arts and culture institutions that will enhance the economic benefits from the county’s visitor economy.

29. a) **New Collaborations:**

Collaborative projects and partnership working are an integral part of the work of most, if not all, of the county's arts and cultural organisations, but the reach of existing partnerships is limited by the availability of the financial resources that are required to support the human resource to lead and animate these activities. As a first step, the network of organisations that has produced this Strategic Framework will seek to use their current resources in new ways to support collaborations which address the needs identified in this document. To scale this activity up to the level that is needed will mean bringing in new funding streams, either through developer contributions (s.106/ CIL) or through specific budget allocations from the LEP or the local authorities.

As the Housing and Growth Deal progresses, the Growth Board and the LEP should seek to secure central government funding for a Community Partnership Fund. This Fund would be available to make grants to arts and culture bodies to set up new collaborative projects that will increase access to cultural services in under-resourced parts of the county. It could also provide the basis for a Cultural Development Agency for the county linking arts provision to the creation of new enterprises spinning out from cultural organisations.

b) Supporting place-making:

The spatial planning of the county over the next quarter of a century will be guided by the Joint Strategic Spatial Plan and the Local Plans of each of the District Councils, supplemented in some areas by Neighbourhood Plans. If we are to realise our aim of building strong and healthy communities and enabling thoughtful placemaking it is important that full account is taken of the need to provide space and resources for arts and cultural activities, venues and support. Planning obligations and developer contributions should be made available to support these objectives, and local authority support will be needed to support community-based initiatives, using grants won from charities or other organisations which fund citizen-led projects.

Some key projects identified here would be:

- The development of the Witney Corn Exchange as a theatre/performance space
- The creation of additional space for the Chipping Norton Theatre
- The refurbishment and modernisation of the Abbey Buildings in Abingdon and the Kenton Theatre in Henley on Thames
- A permanent home for the youth and community projects led by OYAP in Bicester
- A community and arts space in Carterton

- A community and arts space in the Didcot Garden Town

c) Supporting the visitor economy:

A number of projects identified or referred to throughout this Strategic Framework have the potential to make a significant contribution to the county's visitor economy, as well as contributing to the wider cultural provision for the people of Oxfordshire. They are summarised here; the list could be extended and refined, but it is offered as a 'call off' agenda for use by OxLEP whenever opportunities arise to secure funding from central government 'pots'.

- Modern Art Oxford has a plan for a major internal reorganisation and improvement of its building that would enable MAO to house larger exhibitions and extend its community and education programme across the county. This £4 million project would raise MAO's profile as a visitor destination.
- A Bicester Arts Centre/Theatre: the global impact of Bicester Village as a key tourist destination, particularly for the Far East market, could be further developed if Bicester were able to offer evening arts events to retain visitors in the town. Local hotel accommodation is growing and an attractive theatre/dance /music offer would further enhance the appeal of the Bicester Village/Blenheim Palace/Oxford triangle.
- Cogges Farm is undeveloped as a visitor attraction and with additional resources it could be more extensively marketed, particularly to families with children and young people. Its value as a local educational centre is also important and could be enhanced.

30. Next Steps:

This Strategic Framework is submitted to the Cultural and Visitor Economy Sub-Group of the LEP as the basis for future action by the arts and cultural organisations from across the county that have contributed to its drafting, alongside the LEP and the Growth Board.

The network group will take forward the commitment to extend collaboration and partnership working with the aim of offering as large a proportion of the county's population as possible the opportunity to experience great art and culture, and to participate in it.