

Committee: Local Plan Leadership Group

Title: Culture, Creativity & the Arts – Baseline Assessment

Report Author: Joanna Hill, Planning Policy Officer
jhill@uttlesford.gov.uk

Date:
Wednesday 9
March 2022

Summary

1. This report sets out the Baseline Assessment of Culture, Creativity & the Arts in Uttlesford to inform cultural and social infrastructure needs in the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan.

Recommendations

2. To note the findings of the work and to utilise it in the development of the emerging Local Plan.

Financial Implications

3. This work is within the 2021/22 budget.

Background Papers

4. N/a

Impact

- 5.

Communication /Consultation	The timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
Community Safety	N/a
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment (EqHIA).
Health and Safety	N/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with

	regulations.
Sustainability	Forthcoming policies will need to meet the sustainability objectives of the Council and the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/a

Situation

6. The First Consultation on the local plan identified the importance of community facilities, heritage and a sense of place, and identified the need for an arts and culture strategy. This study is a Baseline Assessment of Culture, Creativity & the Arts across the District.
7. It is intended to inform the emerging Local Plan on cultural and social infrastructure. The National Planning Policy Framework's social objective requires the provision of 'accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being' (para 8b).
8. This evidence base supports the existing evidence base:
 - Uttlesford Indoor Sports Facilities Needs Assessment (December 2018)
 - Uttlesford Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (February 2019)
 - Uttlesford Playing Pitch Assessment Report (May 2019)
 - Uttlesford Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan (May 2019)
 - Uttlesford Open Space Assessment Report (February 2019)
 - Uttlesford Open Space Standards Paper (February 2019)
9. The study concludes that there is a fairly good provision across the District in terms of accessible community space (mainly in the form of village hall and community spaces). This is important for a rural District, and there are good local structures set up to run them (some part of a Parish Council and others independent). It identifies seven key themes, reflecting key opportunities and challenges:
 - Planning: identifying cultural (and community) infrastructure need
 - Leverage Opportunities for funding and investment
 - Focus on maintaining existing cultural infrastructure
 - Young People – supporting their cultural and social wellbeing through culture
 - Extending spatial access to culture and heritage assets
 - Utilising cultural and heritage assets to support a vibrant economy

- Meeting Future Provision

10. Alongside these themes the report makes 38 recommendations. Some of these relate to Planning and land use and some relate to the wider remit of delivering community services and supporting the local economy. The recommendations are summarised in the table below:

	Theme	Possible actions and recommendations
1	Planning: identifying cultural (and community) infrastructure need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlock new sources of funding for accessible community facilities • Unlock resources to invest in improving existing village halls and community spaces to ensure they can provide well for existing and new communities
2	Leverage Opportunities for funding and investment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address the current apparent deficit in applications to core funders including the Arts Council and National Lottery Heritage Fund, as well as Essex County Council and other trust and foundations. 2. Encourage coordination of funding to maximise impact, and smaller pots of investment could also be utilised to lever in additional external funding. 3. Identify mechanisms to support investment into the sector through the Planning System (including Section 106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy). 4. Uttlesford District will not be a priority for 'Levelling-Up', but there is an opportunity to seek to secure investment for the wider creative sectors through Government or Regional initiatives. E.g. South East Local Enterprise Partnership 5. Consider non-arts and cultural funding for arts and cultural activities and programmes e.g utilising public health budgets 6. Collect data and seek to quantify the value of arts, culture and heritage to the District 7. Support Fairycroft House CIC and Saffron Walden Town Council to progress current outline proposals for regular use of the Essex CC-owned community building adjacent to Fairycroft House 8. Support Fairycroft House in securing some necessary capital funding for internal works

		<p>9. Support the proposed major application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) by Saffron Walden Museum</p> <p>10. In considering the future of the four Day Centres in the District, UDC could work with a range of organisations (including cultural and heritage) to identify opportunities for regular activities that could engage local communities</p> <p>11. Consider the future of the Fry Art Gallery Too building on Museum Street as an arts/craft and creative space for studios for emerging creative practitioners</p>
3	Focus on maintaining existing cultural infrastructure	<p>12. Consider the future of the Fry Art Gallery Too building on Museum Street as an arts/craft and creative space for studios for emerging creative practitioners</p> <p>13. Outdoor events can be important cultural occasions with opportunities for performances and collaboration between local organisations</p> <p>14. Building on plans for a new Visit Uttlesford tourism-related programme, consider the opportunity to bring different cultural, arts and heritage organisations together and to work collaboratively on a core offer and narrative for Uttlesford</p> <p>15. Investigate a collaborative network (or at least a way of sharing good practice relating to funding/development/investment for example)</p> <p>16. Encourage Village Hall committees and other groups responsible for rural community buildings to join the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE).</p> <p>17. Seek to engage representatives from the Recorders of Uttlesford History in a future Cultural Network to fully understand their importance and contribution their local communities</p> <p>18. Consider a collaborative Rural Touring programme for Uttlesford that focuses on accessible (and potentially participatory) performances in rural locations (including Village Halls).</p> <p>19. Consider collaborating with the National Trust to consider a new festival or large-scale event</p>

		<p>20. Support the National Trust in securing future investment for Shell House</p> <p>21. Consider an 'open studios' programme that focused on all areas of the District</p>
4	Young People – supporting their cultural and social wellbeing through culture	<p>22. Consider opportunities in Uttlesford for a Local Cultural Education Partnership</p> <p>23. Identify additional external match funding (through cultural organisations' core funding or through external funding bids) to improve further cultural participation for young people and make more regular use of existing youth spaces.</p> <p>24. A lot of youth activity takes place at Fairycroft House. Some capital investment (particularly in the main function room on the ground floor) in the existing building would ensure more activities throughout the week.</p> <p>25. Seek to reinvigorate the Uttlesford Youth Council</p> <p>26. Encourage the taking up of Arts Award within schools and or local community and cultural organisations</p>
5	Extending spatial access to culture and heritage assets	<p>27. Utilise the Uttlesford District Council Geographic Information System (GIS) to map cultural assets, taking information from the Baseline Database</p> <p>28. Consider access to culture, arts and heritage activities and locations as part of the process of identifying strategic public transport initiatives (including cycling which can be part of a cultural/environmental offer)</p>
6	Utilising cultural and heritage assets to support a vibrant economy	<p>29. Planning policies should recognise the changing nature of town centre economies, with a shift away from traditional retail-focused sectors towards leisure, hospitality and experiences.</p> <p>30. Support efforts to get more visitors to some of the largest cultural/heritage organisations (Saffron Hall, Audley End in particular) to visit Saffron Walden town centre as part of their visit.</p> <p>31. Consider a programme of regular evening events that engage local businesses in Saffron Walden to support the evening</p>

		<p>economy</p> <p>32. Consider re-establishing a Tourist Information Centre in Great Dunmow</p> <p>33. The facilities available for cultural/arts activities in both Dunmow Arts Centre and Dunmow Maltings (home to the Museum) appear relatively underutilised (as well as the knowledge and expertise associated with both). Efforts should be made to promote them which would support their resilience and their cultural contribution to the town</p>
7	Meeting Future Provision	<p>34. Create a strong narrative for Uttlesford that positions arts, culture, heritage (including natural heritage) at the centre, potentially through a cultural network, promoting a distinct, diverse offer</p> <p>35. Consider identifying a location for flexible and affordable studio space within the District</p> <p>36. Ensure that policies emerging through the Local Plan are flexible to recognise opportunities for the conversion of rural or farm related buildings to other uses including culture/creative space</p> <p>37. Work with parishes/communities to identify need for creative/cultural spaces of all kinds</p> <p>38. Through a future cultural network and Cultural Strategy, further analyse the make-up of Governance of arts, culture and heritage organisations and groups in the District</p>

11. The next stage of this project would be to develop a Cultural Strategy to drive an action plan and opportunities for funding and investment.

12. Recommendations relevant to planning will be considered for the emerging Local Plan.

Risk Analysis

1.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If the Council does not have an NPPF compliant	2	a potential delay to the timetable for	Professional evidence developed in line with

evidence base the plan could be found unsound		the Local Plan production	the NPPF and PPG
---	--	------------------------------	------------------

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.