

Devon Strategic Partnership

stronger together

Sustainable Community Strategy for Devon

Theme Analysis

Culture

January 2007

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Devon Strategic Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy

Strategic Analysis Template for Evidence Base

Culture theme analysis

Context: the DSP is producing a new Sustainable Community Strategy by mid 2007. One part of this document is to be a web based evidence base to be developed by early 2007. This document contributes to the evidence base by taking the statistical data that has been identified for every theme, and providing an expert strategic analysis that ideally has the backing of key agencies and organisations in the theme. When this information is added to the views of residents, agencies and organisations regarding current issues and a vision for the future, a clear mandate will be established for the issues that the Devon Strategic Partnership should be pursuing in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Theme: Culture
Written by: Simon Timms
Title & Organisation: Head of Culture, Devon CC
Link to theme/ Devon Strategic Partnership (e.g. DSP theme champion, LAA lead):

This text is based on the Devon pilot LAA content for Culture as one of its cross-cutting themes.

Signed on behalf of the theme: Simon Timms

Date: 1 December 2006

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Introduction to Culture as a Theme

National Context

Happiness – Creativity – Well-being. All these life essentials have their roots in community and personal cultural experiences. The Government has adopted a broad definition of “culture” to include the following experiences:

- the performing and visual arts, craft and fashion, especially in public settings;
- media, film, television, video and language;
- museums, artefacts, archives and design;
- libraries, literature, writing and publishing;
- the built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology;
- sports participation, events, facilities and development;
- parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation;
- children’s play, playgrounds and play activities;
- tourism, festivals and attractions; and
- informal leisure pursuits.

Thus defined, culture is an inclusive concept whose values extend to shared memories, experience and identity; diverse religious and historic backgrounds; and what is considered valuable to pass on to future generations.

The Government is placing emphasis on the value of culture both in its own right and as a cross-cutting ‘quality of life’ theme. Its potential is being increasingly recognised in policy areas such as urban/rural regeneration and healthy living.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is the lead government department for cultural activities. In the SW, the regional cultural consortium - Culture South West – is playing a key strategic role in developing the region’s cultural potential. It has direct links with regional/ cultural agencies such as:

- Arts Council England, South West
- English Heritage South West
- Lottery Funders South West
- South West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
- South West Regional Development Agency
- South West Tourism
- South West Screen
- Sport England South West

Devon Context

Devon has an outstanding cultural heritage ranging from two World Heritage Sites to the heritage city of Exeter and the international music festival at Dartington.

The cultural heritage is the main attraction for many visitors coming on holiday to Devon and the South West

Devon has a diverse voluntary sector – schools, clubs, pubs, village halls and societies holding numerous cultural activities.

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Devon currently offers both her residents and visitors a wide range of formal and informal cultural experiences. Some cultural activities are already demonstrating promising potential (e.g. the links between culture and tourism); others are less well recognised in local political agendas.

In spatial and community terms, cultural provision can helpfully be considered under the following headings:

- Exeter and its sub-region
- Devon's market and coastal towns and the rural hinterlands that each of them serves.

In rural parts of Devon, village communities have a key role to play in providing local cultural opportunities. This is particularly relevant to Devon which has over 420 parishes. Village halls and schools can offer a wealth of cultural experiences, often largely created by voluntary organisations.

ISSUE No: One

TITLE OF ISSUE: Better integration of cultural provision across Devon

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** The opportunity for people to participate in cultural opportunities in Devon is affected by the fragmented nature of service provision across the county.

Different sectors (e.g. sport, arts, and heritage) have tended to develop in distinct ways within the varying remits of their national and regional agendas (e.g. through Sport England, Arts Council England, English Heritage).

The provision of some cultural services is not a statutory requirement for local authorities. As a result, councils in Devon have taken different approaches to promoting culture.

Although there are some strong county partnerships for specific cultural activities (e.g. the new Active Devon Partnership), there are currently few robust cultural partnerships in Devon that cover the breadth of the cultural sector. Culture SW, the regional cultural consortium, has been progressing better integration at the regional level, but there is still much to be done at the sub-regional and county levels.

- b Who does it affect?** This issue affects:
- people and communities in Devon
 - the voluntary cultural sector
 - local government cultural services
 - the regional cultural agencies

- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** All of Devon

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

- a How do you know the issue is there?**

Robust data to underpin this issue is not currently available. The issue has however been identified in a number of studies including: the DSP's *Focus on Devon*; the Devon LAA; DCMS's emerging work on Regional Cultural Commentaries; the County Council's Strategic Plan.

- b Links to other strategies**

Document or author	Title of document and web address?	How is issue raised?	Implications for Devon
Devon Local Area Agreement	www.devonsp.org.uk/laa.html	Pages 56 - 59	

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SW Regional Cultural Strategy	www.culturesouthwest.org.uk	Regional Cultural Strategy + Regional Cultural Research	
DSP Focus on Devon	www.devonsp.org.uk	Page 122	
DCC Strategic Plan	http://www.devon.gov.uk/strategicplan	Pages 10 - 11	

c Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

Theme/ issue	Possible links to/ impact of this issue on:
Environmental sustainability, including climate change and sustainable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use of resources (e.g. premises) • Reduced need to travel
Economic sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better business planning for cultural provision • Enhanced project viability
Social sustainability e.g. community cohesiveness and individual well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced community engagement
Rural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cultural opportunities
Housing	
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better physical/mental health
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced levels of activity
Children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced levels of activity
Safer Devon	
Strong Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced community identity
Culture	N/A
Transport and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cultural accessibility
Other (please specify) Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced 'Devon' brand

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

The key challenge is to enhance the capacity for the cultural sector in Devon to speak and act with 'one voice'. This will be critical for Culture being fully embedded in the revised Devon LAA. The formation of one or more cultural partnerships that encompass the full breadth of cultural opportunities would be an important step towards this.

ISSUE No: Two

TITLE OF ISSUE: Improving access to cultural opportunities

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** People can be discouraged from expressing themselves creatively by experiencing difficulty in gaining ready access to cultural opportunities. This is a real issue in terms of physical access (e.g. the need to travel to cultural centres; the availability of public transport).

National transport policy is tending to focus on priorities relating to the economy (e.g. access to work). It does not give such high priority to access for cultural activities. As a result Local Transport Plans provide only limited funding for improvements which will enhance cultural access. This places greater emphasis on the need to take cultural activities to communities (e.g. through mobile library and archives services; touring arts programmes)

A further particular issue is the trend towards a reduction in organised school trips for cultural activities. This again has been brought about through national policy changes, although there have been recent indications that the Government is looking afresh at this issue.

Access can also be restricted by the lack of easily accessible information about cultural opportunities (e.g. on how people can become involved in cultural groups and societies). Digitisation of cultural information (e.g. historical records) has considerable potential to contribute to more accessible information.

- b Who does it affect?** This issue particularly affects those who have limited mobility, do not own a car or are not able to use one regularly. This includes visitors to Devon as well as residents.

As well as the issue of organised school visits referred to above, children and young people can also experience problems with travelling to/from their cultural activities, (e.g. for evening/weekend events)

The issue can also affect people who do not have access to or are not confident in using the Internet to obtain information.

- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** The size and rural nature of Devon mean that this issue can be particularly significant to people, schools and communities in remoter rural areas.

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

- a How do you know the issue is there?**

Robust data to underpin this issue for Devon is not currently available.

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The issue for Devon has however been previously identified in a number of studies including: the DSP's *Focus on Devon*; the pilot Devon LAA, The Devon Local Transport Plan; the County Council's Strategic Plan.

b Links to other strategies

Document or author	Title of document and web address?	How is issue raised?	Implications for Devon
Local Area Agreement	www.devonsp.org.uk/laa.html	pp 56 - 59	
Regional Spatial Strategy	SW Regional Spatial Strategy	pp 140 - 141	
Devon Local Transport Plan	http://www.devon.gov.uk/transport_plan		
DSP Focus on Devon	www.devonsp.org.uk	p 122	
DCC Strategic Plan	http://www.devon.gov.uk/strategicplan	p 10 -11	

Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

Theme/ issue	Possible links to/ impact of this issue on:
Environmental sustainability, including climate change and sustainable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use of resources (e.g. premises) • Reduced need to travel
Economic sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater levels of participation
Social sustainability e.g. community cohesiveness and individual well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced community engagement
Rural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved local provision of opportunities
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cultural provision linked to areas of housing growth.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better physical/mental health
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced levels of activity
Children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced levels of activity

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Safer Devon	
Strong Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced community identity
Culture	N/A
Transport and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cultural accessibility
Other (please specify) Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better sustainable access for tourism attractions

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

Three key challenges may be identified:

- ensuring that more recognition is given to cultural access when setting priorities for the provision of public and community transport services.
- improving the quality and availability of cultural information on the web and through other key sources of information (e.g. tourism leaflets; digitisation and e-reference material through libraries)
- promoting greater opportunities for organised school visits.

ISSUE No: Three

TITLE OF ISSUE: Identifying standards of cultural entitlement

1 Identification of Issue

- a What is the issue for Devon?** The provision of cultural services and activities in Devon has tended to develop in an uneven way. This means that residents of one Devon town (or urban neighbourhood) may have a better range – in terms of both quantity and quality - of services on hand than those of another. This includes services which come to a community (e.g. mobile libraries and touring arts projects) as well as services located in the community.

There is at present no common understanding of or formal standard for what level of cultural services are appropriate for different types of communities. This makes it difficult to plan for the future needs of communities in Devon as the county grows.

- b Who does it affect?** This issue affects people in communities throughout Devon. It may perhaps be helpfully framed by considering two categories of community:
- Exeter and its sub-region
 - Devon's coastal and market towns and their rural hinterlands
- c Does it affect all of Devon geographically or certain parts?** See (b) above.

2 Justification/ demonstration of Issue

- a How do you know the issue is there?**

Robust data to underpin this issue is not currently available. The issue has however been previously identified in the pilot Devon LAA. Currently Culture SW is leading work on the SW Regional Cultural Infrastructure Development Study which will seek to define cultural facilities of regional and sub-regional significance but complementary research on county and local significance has not yet been put in hand. The first tranche of Devon Town Profiles has not extended to covering cultural attributes.

b Links to other strategies

Document or author	Title of document and web address?	How is issue raised?	Implications for Devon
Devon pilot Local Area Agreement	www.devonsp.org.uk/laa.html	Pp 56 - 59	
Regional Spatial Strategy	SW Regional Spatial Strategy	Pp 140 - 141	
SW Regional Cultural Infrastructure Study	www.culturesouthwest.org.uk	Work in progress	

c Links to/ impact on other themes/ issues

Theme/ issue	Possible links to/ impact of this issue on:
Environmental sustainability, including climate change and sustainable energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use of resources (e.g. premises) • Better infrastructure planning
Economic sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater levels of participation
Social sustainability e.g. community cohesiveness and individual well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced community engagement
Rural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved local provision of opportunities
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cultural provision linked to areas of housing growth.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better physical/mental health
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced levels of activity
Children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced levels of activity
Safer Devon	
Strong Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced community identity

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Culture	N/A
Transport and accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved cultural accessibility
Other (please specify) Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced 'Devon' brand

3 Drawing on the above, what therefore is/ are the challenge(s) Devon must meet to address this issue?

The key challenge is to establish a way forward for identifying appropriate levels of cultural entitlement on a community basis. This work might best be pursued with the focus on Exeter and its sub-region and on Devon's market and coastal towns. Progress is likely to be enhanced through a strong partnership(s) approach