

CULTURE AND WELLBEING

**CITYWIDE
CULTURE
STRATEGY
2023-30**

◆ EDINBURGH ◆
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

www.cultureedinburgh.com



CITYWIDE CULTURE STRATEGY

CULTURE AND CREATIVITY - THE INCUBATOR OF EDINBURGH'S FUTURE

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THIS STRATEGY FOR?

Edinburgh has a long history as a world centre of creative thought and practice.

The health and vibrancy of the culture and creative sectors in Edinburgh are fundamental to our success as a city; whether that success is defined in terms of:

- the number of people who choose to live and work here because of our culture and values,
- the contribution of culture to the wellbeing of individual residents,
- the way we treasure our past and support creativity in learning and across disciplines,
- our international reputation as a world festival city,
- the number of tourists who visit,
- the monetary value the creative sector generates and attracts,
- the number of people employed in the sector, or
- how well we embrace and celebrate our diversity.

In thinking about what the future of culture in Edinburgh should look like all these factors need to be considered.

Granton Gas Holder



This strategy outlines the priorities and details the guiding principles that will guide the City of Edinburgh Council's support for culture in Edinburgh over the next 8 years. It is based on evidence and ideas from many sources including:

- City of Edinburgh consultations
- City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan: Our Future Council, Our Future City
- Edinburgh's 2030 Tourism Strategy
- Festivals Edinburgh consultations
- Creative Community hubs research
- Creative Edinburgh research
- The Desire Lines Call to Action
- Thundering Hooves 2.0 report
- Edinburgh; City of Imagination, 2030 vision (Festivals Edinburgh)
- Edinburgh Reimagined (Morvern Cunningham)
- Professor David Stevenson from Queen Margaret University has acted as a critical friend throughout.

During the global pandemic, the cultural and creative sector was severely impacted, with entire industries, income streams and livelihoods shut down. People have been unable to take part in activities essential for mental health or to be inspired by the live performance and work of others.

However, during this period, creative minds have been hard at work, reappraising long term challenges, looking for the opportunities presented by the new context, exploring new ways of working, of connecting to old and new audiences and of understanding and developing the many benefits of engaging with culture and creativity to the city, to organisations, communities, groups and individuals.

Now is the time to learn from our experience, to reimagine the future, to set new goals, to be clear about what we value and to seek to develop the immensely rich cultural assets of Edinburgh in a way that benefits, inspires and includes all residents as well as those that chose to visit our amazing, precious and unique city.





INTRODUCTION

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CULTURE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT? HOW DOES A CULTURAL ECOLOGY WORK?

We express ourselves, our culture, our values, our ideas, our aspirations and thoughts through creativity and art. Our culture is our way of life, it is made up of the attitudes, values and ambitions that we share. Culture is not a fixed thing it is constantly changing and evolving, it is influenced and enriched by our diverse and shared histories, by world events and by the people who choose to come and live, work, visit and study here.

Edinburgh is officially the most diverse city in Scotland (Scotland's census 2021) and this diversity should be encouraged, facilitated and celebrated. Participating in cultural and creative activities is a fundamental and integral part of the well-being of every one of us. The evidence for this is strong and growing, not least through the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Arts and Health

and the Arts Culture Health and Wellbeing Scotland Network.

What we mean by “well-being” in Scotland is best articulated in the National Performance Framework and SHANARRI principles. As evidenced in A Culture Strategy for Scotland cultural activity can positively transform lives and communities, it provides means of expression, a sense of purpose; it helps prevent feelings of loneliness and isolation. The breadth and diversity of cultural activity across the city must be recognised, valued and supported so that everyone can benefit.

Cultural and creative activity sustains and challenges us and gives us the tools to understand ourselves, our communities, and our society and to imagine different possibilities.

Usher Hall



Since the Scottish Enlightenment Edinburgh has played a role as a world centre for cultural and creative enquiry, this role is as important now as it has ever been.

We build our individual, community and civic identities through culture and creativity. We are endlessly different in our enjoyment and consumption of, and participation in, cultural activities, whether we prefer rap or classical music or enjoy both; whether we write poetry never intended to be read by anyone; whether we make our living, or would like to (or not) by working in the cultural and creative industries; whether we are interested in our own history or the history of our communities or prefer to look at and be inspired or challenged by our old and new architecture, whether we enjoy watching films, reading, singing on our own or with others, dancing, only at weddings or in the spotlight or anything in between. All these activities are valuable.

Whatever we choose to do, it is an expression of who we are. They are what makes us feel good, what inspires us and

allows us to enjoy life no matter where or how we live. It is a human right enshrined in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Such a breadth of activity requires an appropriate range of spaces in which it can take place. Spaces where communities, groups and individuals can explore and nurture their creativity; places to access books, music, paintings, films, heritage objects and more; nightclubs, public squares and venues that attract world class professionals that are safe, comfortable and welcoming for audiences and artists alike; studios where cultural professionals can make and develop their work and office space for cultural organisations to plan and develop programmes and connections. These needs must be considered in city planning and developments.

In terms of the economic impact, the Festivals' Collective Impact report of 2016 found that the 11 international festivals contributed £313m to Scotland's economy and 5,660FTE jobs were created annually in the Edinburgh economy.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 27:

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits





INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL IN THIS CULTURAL ECOLOGY?

The City of Edinburgh Council is responsible for providing political leadership and governance for a comprehensive range of services across the city. It functions as a collector and dispenser of public funds, a licensor, a guardian of public safety, a developer, a facilitator and an influencer. The Council has various roles, connections, and responsibilities across the cultural sector. In some cases, it is a venue owner and/or programmer (for example; Usher Hall, Assembly rooms, Edinburgh Museums, Edinburgh Libraries, some community centres); in some cases it is the landlord (for example; Capital Theatres, Lyceum Theatre, Fruitmarket Gallery); sometimes it is a financial supporter or advocate and sometimes it is a facilitator.

The City of Edinburgh Council is a part of the cultural ecology of Edinburgh, but it

is rarely, if ever, solely responsible for delivering the cultural activities that take place. Instead, we work in partnership with many other organisations and individuals including, Scottish and UK Governments, international, national and local arts and cultural organisations, higher and further education institutions, resident's fora, emergency services, tourism and enterprise bodies and community groups.

This strategy compliments Museums and Galleries Scotland National Strategy and Historic Environment Scotland's Strategy. We work with UNESCO to maintain our 2 World Heritage sites and our designation as the original UNESCO City of Literature. These relationships are built on integrity, openness, respect, trust and a shared desire to see culture and creativity in Edinburgh thrive for the benefit of all.



Because of the importance of cultural and creative activity to individuals and societal wellbeing, this strategy contributes to achieving the goals of City of Edinburgh Council's Business Plan: Our Future Council, Our Future City. The ambitions of this strategy contribute to the following council priorities:

Edinburgh's cultural activity continues to be a source of inspiration for local people and enhances our national and international reputation – we will:

- a. Work with Edinburgh's Festivals to ensure sustainable recovery and renewal takes place
- b. Ensure the cultural and sporting assets across the city are effectively delivering maximum value for money from cultural, social, wellbeing, and economic perspectives and delivering quality outcomes for local communities
- c. Seek to ensure our cultural buildings are fit for the future
- d. Maximise the role of the voluntary sector, in the sporting and arts sectors, to deliver quality outcomes for local communities.



Winter Festivals

INTRODUCTION

WHERE IS THE CULTURAL ECOLOGY IN EDINBURGH NOW?

There is no question that Edinburgh has a strong and diverse cultural ecology that has enriched the lives of residents and visitors for centuries. It is a capital city, the UK's festival city, it has a global reputation because of its culture and is a major driver of visitors to Scotland.

However, the world has undergone significant change in the past few years and the cultural sector is no exception. Cultural organisations and venues have had little or no income for over two years and are struggling to stay afloat financially, rebuild staff teams, rethink business models, and redesign their offers. This in turn affects a whole range of service businesses and jobs created by the vibrant cultural life of the city.

Digital technology has been a lifeline for many during lockdown providing a means of connection. Many cultural organisations have "pivoted" to online delivery to stay in touch with existing audiences and attract those who have not engaged with their organisations before.

2 UNESCO World Heritage Sites
11 public museums and art galleries
11 world-class festivals
23 school libraries
28 public libraries
38 community centres
200 monuments
5,500+ freelance workers that are members of Creative Edinburgh
200,000 items in the collections of the museums and galleries
4.5m visitors (pre-Covid)



Calton Hill

However, these new methods have not replaced the lost income from live interaction or provided the same depth of experience. Furthermore, while for some, digital provision feels safe and has addressed some issues of accessibility, for others it has had the opposite affect and issues of digital exclusion must be considered. Added to this, audiences are feeling their way back into a socialised world, everyone is re-evaluating where and how they feel safe, what risks they are willing to take, and what activities now make them feel good and enhance their lives.

It is likely that continued change and unpredictability will be constants for the foreseeable future. Within this context the priorities for the city of Edinburgh Council must be to find ways in which it can continue to support the cultural ecology of Edinburgh with ambition and integrity to retain Edinburgh's position as an international focal point for creativity, and to ensure that all residents have equitable access

to quality cultural services that they find meaningful and valuable.

Delivering on these priorities will involve navigating several considerable challenges, some specific to Edinburgh and some being felt nationally. There is a concentration of cultural provision in the city centre leading to many other areas feeling neglected and less valued and to high peak concentrations of people with a consequential negative environmental impact in the city centre. Great care needs to be taken to manage this and balance the responsibilities of a welcoming host with care for residents and the environment. Equally, public finances are forecast to be very constrained over the next four years and philanthropic giving is becoming increasingly competitive. These financial pressures are taking place against a background of significant inflationary pressures that will affect everyone but will be felt most acutely by the least well off and most vulnerable.

The impact of Covid in terms of access to cultural services in Edinburgh.

Visits to museums and galleries

2018: 706,564

2020: 8,924

Attendance at major festivals

2019: 4,960,297

2021: 792,928

Libraries: Items loaned

2018-19, 1,682,532

2020-21, 75,401

Libraries: Downloads

(eBooks, eMagazines, eNewspapers)

2018-19: 911,942

2020-21: 2,958,560

Libraries: PC usage

2018-19: 266,062

2020-21: 2,662



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE VISION FOR 2030? WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

In 2030 Edinburgh will be a city that:

- has a network of well run, ambitious and accessible local creative and cultural hubs throughout the city where all residents can feel safe, welcomed, able to participate in, develop and influence cultural activities that have meaning for them. These hubs will be connected to the city centre venues and organisations as respected and equal partners enlivening their programming and enhancing audience development.
- is internationally connected and a magnet for creative thinkers and practitioners from across the world who choose to live, work, visit and study here.
- has a range of accessible spaces where creative practitioners can experiment, develop, rehearse and produce their work.
- values culture and creativity as an essential element of individual and collective wellbeing, embedding this principle in city, community, and public health planning.
- facilitates opportunities for all young people to experience a range of cultural and creative experiences and encourages and nurtures creative talent and enthusiasm.
- ensures the diversity of the population is reflected in the planning and delivery of cultural provision and the way we interpret and experience our heritage.
- values creative workers and embeds the principles of fair work and good practice in volunteering in all its planning and contracting.

Edinburgh Castle

- cares for its unique urban environment; its historic buildings and green spaces, by appropriately balancing the demands of accessibility and protection through planning, investment, and regulation.
- is a model of excellence in partnership working with all stakeholders, working collaboratively, openly, with respect and integrity.
- is known across the world as a cultural capital; a fun, inspiring, safe, fair and vibrant place where it is evident that the positive impacts of culture to individual and collective wellbeing are understood.

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES THAT WILL INFORM THE DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY?

- Everyone has the right to participate freely in the cultural life of the community.
- Culture and creativity are essential and fundamental to the wellbeing of the city, localities, communities, groups, and individuals.
- The cultural vibrancy of the city is a collective endeavour; power, responsibility and opportunity are shared.
- Diverse cultures, voices and stories are essential to cultural growth.
- Fairness, respect, environmental responsibility, and equity of opportunity are fundamental to a healthy cultural ecology.
- Local, national, and international connections are enriching and vital.
- Our shared and different heritages are important and provide inspiration for cultural expression today.
- The cultural and creative workforce should be supported to explore, innovate, and take creative risks



WHAT ARE THE HIGH-LEVEL AIMS FOR THE STRATEGY?

AIM 1

ALL EDINBURGH RESIDENTS CAN EASILY ACCESS CULTURAL EXPERIENCES THAT THEY FIND MEANINGFUL IN THEIR LOCAL AREA, AND EVERYONE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO SHAPING LOCAL CULTURAL PROVISION

AIM 2

EDINBURGH IS A WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE CITY IN WHICH A BROAD SPECTRUM OF CREATIVE AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS CHOOSE TO DEVELOP THEIR CAREERS

AIM 3

EDINBURGH IS A WORLD LEADING CULTURAL CAPITAL, AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE HOST CITY WHERE IDEAS ARE EXCHANGED FREELY, AND THE DIVERSITY OF ITS RESIDENTS IS CELEBRATED

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIM 1. ALL EDINBURGH RESIDENTS CAN EASILY ACCESS CULTURAL EXPERIENCES THAT THEY FIND MEANINGFUL IN THEIR LOCAL AREA, AND EVERYONE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO SHAPING LOCAL CULTURAL PROVISION

Why this aim matters

Cultural provision is essential for wellbeing therefore residents need to have easy access to relevant resources and opportunities no matter what their personal circumstances or where or how they live. Local community facilities allow trusted relationships to grow, they are places where interests and talents can be explored, uncovered, and developed, they promote social cohesion and confident cultural identities, prevent isolation and loneliness and enable signposting to other services. They provide a focal point for debate and discussion and facilitated creative activity enables local voices to be expressed and heard.

What success for this aim will look like

- The majority of people in Edinburgh will feel that it is a creative place to live, and they can easily access cultural services they find meaningful near to where they live.
- Residents will report enhanced wellbeing as a result of participating in cultural activity
- Residents will feel they have a say in local cultural provision
- The boards of cultural organisations in Edinburgh will be more diverse
- The city's museum and art collections will be accessible at more locations.

AIM 1



To deliver this aim we will:

- Ensure cultural provision is embedded in Council plans for 20-minute neighbourhoods and community planning.
- Work in collaboration with other council teams particularly in sustainable development, public health, social work, and education services to ensure the contribution of culture to wellbeing is recognised, included in planning, and the use of resources is maximised.
- Work in partnership with EVOC to better connect cultural organisations to communities and support good practice.
- Ensure project funding supports organisations in a wide range of postcodes
- Provide support and opportunities for local cultural organisations to share knowledge and experience and facilitate connections between the local and centrally based organisations.
- Review Museum and Gallery service delivery to explore ways of making collections more accessible outwith the city centre.
- Review the council estate to explore ways cultural services can be more effectively delivered across the city.
- Develop the core cultural service offer available across the city's libraries in response to local need and focussing activities and opportunities in communities where participation levels are historically low.
- Improve access to the libraries cultural resources including books, heritage collections, digital resource, music lending services, access to computers and wifi.
- Undertake programmes of engagement with local residents, communities and community management committees to ensure the cultural content and opportunities to participate are relevant and meet local interest and need.
- Encourage cultural organisations to diversify their Boards to ensure the population is more accurately represented.
- Review ticket pricing structures for cultural venues to ensure a fair balance between income generation and affordability.





AIM 2

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIM 2. EDINBURGH IS A WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE CITY IN WHICH A BROAD SPECTRUM OF CREATIVE AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS CHOOSE TO DEVELOP THEIR CAREERS.

Why this aim matters

A creative workforce that feels supported and is valued is essential to the delivery of all our cultural services and to creating the vibrant cultural ecology we seek to sustain. They need time and space to develop their practice and appropriate and safe places and resources to work with others to produce quality outcomes. Whether they are freelance or employed by organisations, an artist or an arts administrator, they and their work enliven spaces and inspire others. Volunteering has benefits for organisations, localities and the individuals taking part, it is to be encouraged where appropriate and must be done in a safe, managed and fair way that respects the volunteers and interns and is mindful of why they are making this contribution.

What success for this aim will look like

- All organisations and projects that we fund will apply Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Fair work principles and implement good practice guidelines for volunteers and interns.
- There is a wide variety of accessible spaces being used by creative practitioners across the city.
- Artists and creative organisations feel that the application processes for funding are proportionate, advice and support in advance of making an application is readily available and monitoring and evaluation is streamlined.
- There is an active cohort of volunteers and interns who feel valued and treated fairly.
- There are opportunities for the creative workforce to come together, share ideas and undertake training and professional development.

To deliver this aim we will:

- Ensure EDI and Fair Work principles are proactively implemented in all organisations and projects to which we provide funding.
- Work with Further Education / Higher Education partners to identify and fill creative industry skills gaps
- Work collaboratively with Creative Edinburgh to ensure the voice of freelancers is reflected in plans and developments
- Support the development of EPAD's directory of available space for creative practitioners and proactively seek to make new spaces available
- Streamline monitoring and evaluation processes with other major funders to minimise duplication of effort whilst remaining transparent and accountable
- Work in partnership with Volunteer Edinburgh on capacity building for organisations with volunteer programmes
- Ensure good practice guidelines for volunteering and internships are applied in all organisations and projects to which we provide funding.



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIM 3. EDINBURGH MAINTAINS ITS POSITION AS A WORLD LEADING CULTURAL CAPITAL, AND ENHANCES ITS REPUTATION AS AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE HOST CITY WHERE IDEAS ARE EXCHANGED FREELY AND THE DIVERSITY OF ITS RESIDENTS IS CELEBRATED.

Why this aim matters

A world leading cultural capital requires year round infrastructure built on sustainable business models and a cultural ecology that connects the local and global. The city should be an incubator of homegrown talent and a compelling cultural destination, offering citizens new ideas and perspectives and attracting a diverse spectrum of the world's most exciting artists to come and create or present work here while experiencing and contributing to the unique creative and cultural mix that Edinburgh has to offer. Residents across the city should feel the benefit, the challenge and the inspiration this meeting of local and international talent brings and their diversity should be reflected in and

connected to the programmes on offer. The environmental impact of all activity must be carefully considered and inline with the Council's goal of achieving a net zero city by 2030.

What success for this aim will look like

- All Cultural organisations will have developed greater financial security and be undertaking longer term planning.
- The environmental impact of cultural activity taking place in the city is reduced.
- Edinburgh will have a worldwide reputation for the delivery of safe and well managed, inspiring events.
- More creative practitioners and cultural organisations in Edinburgh are involved in active international collaborations.



AIM 3

To deliver this aim we will:

- Support cultural organisations with multi year funding agreements where possible.
- Work in collaboration with other council services to contribute to the net zero goal and work to ensure that in the context of events, our green spaces are respected and used in line with the parks manifesto.
- Facilitate collaboration between the city centre organisations, festivals and local creative hubs for mutual benefit and to ensure the diversity of residents and their needs are reflected in planning.
- Facilitate the regular networking of the international cultural attaches based in Edinburgh.
- Through our application and reporting processes, ensure all organisations and projects to which we provide funding have considered their environmental impact and how to minimise this.
- Support organisations where possible to lever funding from other sources.

- Lead on convening regular city-wide events and public safety planning.
- Liaise with Visit Scotland and Event Scotland to promote Edinburgh as a destination.
- Make the case for any future Transient Visitor Levy to contribute to the upkeep and development of the cultural infrastructure and activity.
- Proactively encourage international connections and networks across service delivery areas.

How progress against our outcomes will be measured:

- Responses to specific questions in the Edinburgh Residents survey.
- Information gathered from funded organisations and projects monitoring forms.
- Collaborating with other stakeholders consultations, research and monitoring.
- Record of attendance at cultural events, initiatives and activities in libraries.

Each team within the Culture and Wellbeing directorate will produce annual operational plans designed to address these aims and achieve these outcomes.





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2023-30**

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
CULTURE AND WELLBEING SERVICE

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