



Wyre Heritage and Culture Strategy 2026 - 2041

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Introduction

Wyre sits along the Lancashire coastline and is made up of a collection of vibrant communities, each with its own distinct character including Poulton-le-Fylde, Thornton, Cleveleys, Fleetwood, Garstang, Knott End-on-Sea as well as numerous villages and surrounding rural areas. Eastern parts of the borough lie within the Forest of Bowland, a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The borough is named after the River Wyre, designated a County Biological Heritage Site. It runs from the Bowland Fells near the village of Abbeystead through villages such as St Michael's and Great Eccleston, finally meeting the Irish Sea at Fleetwood and Knott End-on-Sea and is 28 miles long.

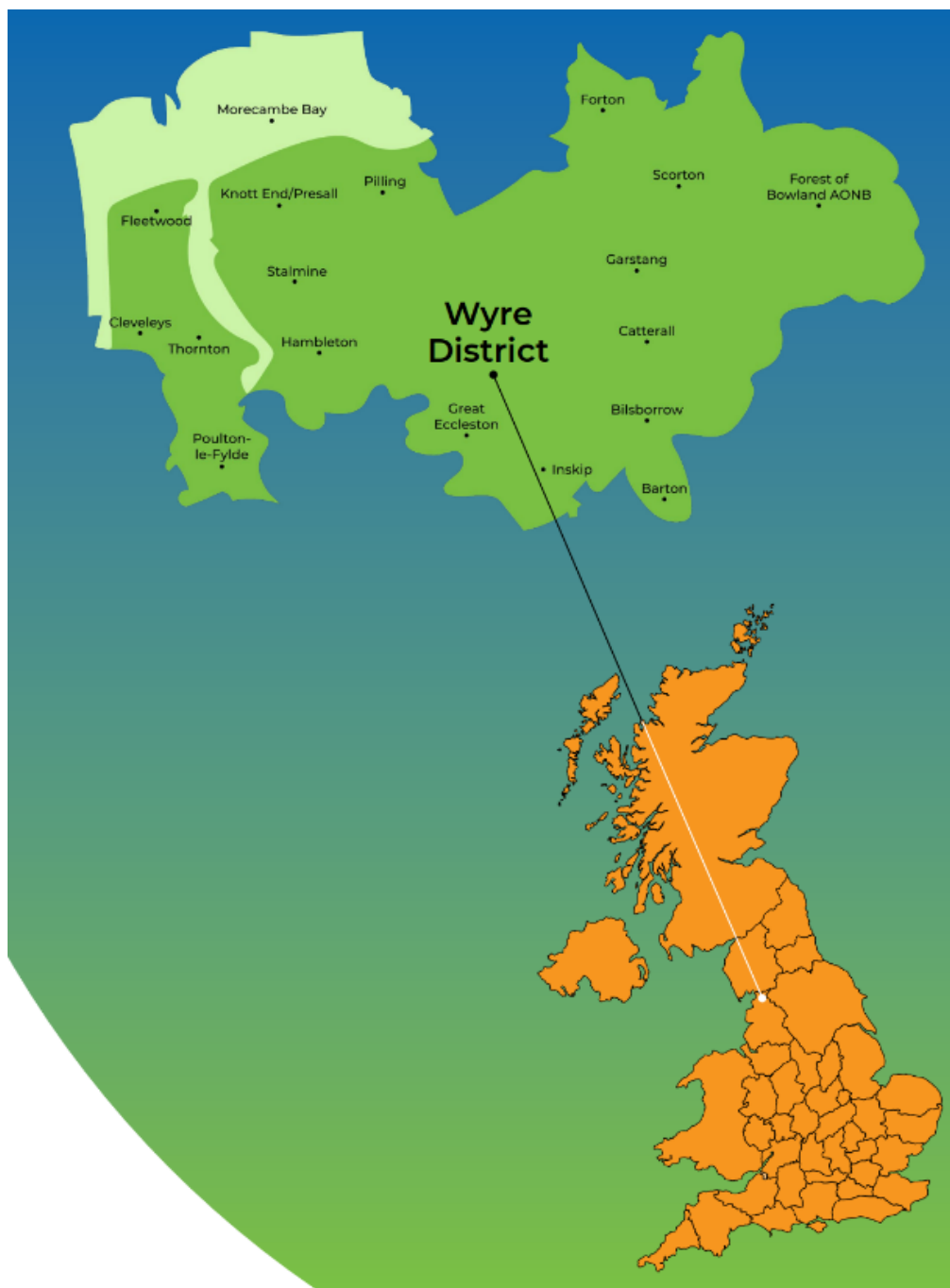
Our neighbouring districts are Blackpool, Fylde, Preston, Ribble Valley and Lancaster. Wyre is part of the Lancashire Combined Authority and is subject to forthcoming local government reorganisation across the county. We recognise the opportunities that this presents in terms of joint project development and funding opportunities. However, we are committed to maintaining the identity of our place as a key hub for heritage and culture. We will therefore ensure that future opportunities to celebrate and preserve our identity are explored and developed with our local communities.

This strategy aims to strengthen, promote and grow our heritage and culture offer. It will help us sustain and develop our existing natural and built heritage and cultural and creative assets to take them with us into the future whilst proactively recognising new opportunities for growth.

There are nine priorities to the strategy.

- **Natural Heritage** - protecting and enhancing the environment.
- **Built Heritage** – protect, conserve and sustainably promote Wyre's historic buildings, structures and heritage infrastructure.
- **Culture and Creativity** - strengthening and supporting community-led culture organisations to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing in our towns and villages.
- **Creative Place shaping** – creating a place where people want to be.
- **Connectivity** – Support the sector to work collaboratively.
- **Creative Enterprise and Skills** – create a diverse workforce and voluntary sector.
- **New Places for Heritage and Culture** – ensuring Wyre's residents can experience heritage and culture in their local areas.
- **Heritage and Cultural Leadership** – drive forward and advocate for the Heritage and Culture Strategy and sector.
- **Capturing Value** – Monitor and evaluate the effect of heritage and culture in Wyre.

We hope that everyone in our towns, villages and communities in the years to come will feel the impact of this Strategy as we realise our ambitions and take essential steps to sustain and where possible grow our heritage and cultural assets and better tell the story of Wyre for generations to come.



Connected Strategies

The Council Plan 2025-28 and associated Directorate Service Plans recognise the value of heritage and culture for the local community and its visitors, as evidenced by the commitment under 'Growth and Prosperity – A thriving local economy and town centres'

The Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy states,

'A rich cultural offer is needed to attract visitors, using events to pull in those visitors and by investing in the arts and museums infrastructure. A commitment exists within the new Economic Development and Visitor Economy Strategy to invest in and facilitate the commission of a Wyre Heritage and Culture Strategy to help secure future investment and development of Wyre as a destination.'

To make clear our commitment to Heritage and Culture a statement of intent was produced as a first stage measure that precedes this more detailed, longer-term Strategy. This Strategy will complement existing key local, regional and national policies and plans

Why we need a Strategy?



Across towns and villages, along our stunning coastline and breathtaking countryside we have a significant heritage and a growing cultural scene, with many opportunities for local residents and visitors to experience both. This Heritage and Cultural Strategy aims to strengthen and promote our existing offer. It also recognises that our district has a marked demographic profile, with a notably high proportion of older residents. NHS England¹ has also identified that Fleetwood, our largest town, is a significantly deprived seaside community that has poor health outcomes and poor mental health compared to the national average. In younger age groups there is twice the Lancashire average

¹ NHS England - [NHS England » Working together to improve health in Fleetwood](#)

unemployment rate. We therefore need to make heritage and culture as open as possible and to offer a high quality and diverse range of creative opportunities, accessible to people of all ages, and in all communities. Some progress has already been made. We have a number of long-established and respected events, galas, festivals and fairs. We also work with harder to reach communities to bring professional performing arts to village halls, libraries, pubs and open spaces across Wyre. There are a number of active and long-established historical societies. There are also two networks for artists and creative practitioners called Fleetwood Arts Partnership and Wyre Creative Network that have recently been established. Their aim is to help local people stay in touch, access funding opportunities and connect with others across the district to identify shared opportunities and challenges. The groups recognise the need for a joined-up approach in order to make creativity and culture an even greater part of Wyre. Wyre Council has also recently made a formal commitment to the process by producing a Heritage and Cultural Statement and forming a quarterly Heritage and Culture working group. So, in 2025, work began to develop this Strategy which will ultimately help us achieve our goals.

*'People like the general environment of Wyre and often associate it with their happy childhood memories. Wyre is Lancashire 'all in one' the uplands, the lowlands, its waterways and its towns and villages all in one district' -
Wyre Coast and Countryside Team.*

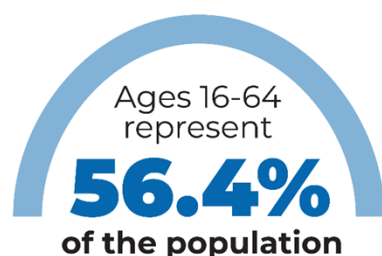
A snapshot of Wyre²

As of 2022 Wyre's population is

114,809 



In the over 90 age range, women outnumber men



White British



Average life expectancy



While less than

13% of Wyre's population lives in the most deprived areas, there are



small areas within the worst **10%** in the country, mainly in Fleetwood (State of Wyre report)

What we mean by Heritage and Culture

Arts, culture and heritage can mean many different things to people. It should aim to engage as wide an audience as possible through a variety of historic and creative industries. It should be defined as the sum of habits, skills, traditions, customs, religion and beliefs. Heritage itself can be touchable things, such as old buildings, monuments, sculptures and historic collections and also untouchable things such as social practices like gala days, sports events and agricultural fairs, or it can be knowledge about nature and traditional crafts or even oral traditions and expressions such as performing arts or talks about local heritage and folklore.

² As of 2022 Wyre's population is 114,809. In the over 90 age range, women outnumber men by 2.1 to 1. The predominant age range is 50+ years of age and the average life expectancy is 80 years. Ages 16 – 64 represent 56.4% of the population. 97% of the Wyre population is White British.

While less than 13% of Wyre's population lives in the most deprived areas, there are 6 small areas within the worst 10% in the country, mainly in Fleetwood (State of Wyre report)

These can often be part of our everyday life in some way and are frequently passed down to new generations through family or close community connections and often have a historic, cultural or social significance be it locally, regionally or nationally.

How we developed the Strategy

To ensure our strategy is distinctive, ambitious, relevant and deliverable, a range of work was undertaken to provide the evidence base for the approach we are taking. We reviewed local, regional and national policies and plans that could influence our strategy and gathered information about recently completed capital projects, as well as those currently under development in Wyre. We consulted widely, through a number of 1-2-1 interviews, workshops and a public survey which had 223 responses. This all took place between April and December 2025.



Wyre's Heritage and Culture - Recent Achievements

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was a Government Fund administrated by the Lancashire County Combined Authority. The aim of the fund was to kickstart economic growth through communities and place and support for local business and people and skills. UKSPF supported a number of heritage and culture projects across Wyre. Some of those achievements included:

- The installation of 10 blue plaques situated on iconic heritage buildings in Fleetwood and an accompanying heritage trail.
- Flakefest - A live music event for local communities in Fleetwood.
- Cleveleys Multiple Arts Projects – Cleveleys Arts Festival, Winterval Festival and street theatre. Development of the Cleveleys history and Mystery Trail.
- Cleveleys Bus Station Mural and 'Andor' seafront marker.
- Wanderland Family Festival in Poulton-le-Fylde.

- Spot On Festival at Poulton Community Hall incorporating theatre, music and dance.
- Wyre Estuary Gateway – improved and accessible pathways from Skippool to Stanah.
- Community Infrastructure Grants - Claughton Memorial Village Hall and Hambleton Village Hall Projects to improve multi-functional space to facilitate more creative and wellbeing activities.
- Garstang Town Centre Public Realm improvements.



Photograph: Poulton Community Hall

Green Flag Award

Wyre has consistently achieved the Green Flag Award and officially been recognised as having some of the country's best parks. In 2025 Wyre Council received Green Flag Awards for Poulton's Vicarage Park and Hawthorne Park, Wyre Estuary Country Park in Thornton and Memorial Park and The Mount in Fleetwood. These sites are five of the 2,250 in the UK to achieve the award, which is the international benchmark for parks and green spaces. These parks and open spaces are vital for communities to enjoy nature. During the ongoing cost of living crisis they are a free and safe space for families to socialise and give important opportunities for people to enjoy the physical and mental health benefits of green spaces.

The Strategy

Our Mission

Wyre is a place where heritage and culture are celebrated, enriching our growing tourism economy and strengthening local pride and ensuring our heritage and culture is cherished, shared, understood and enjoyed by all. We will inspire and encourage creativity and flair and enable cultural connections to flourish. We will be recognised for our glorious heritage and vibrant culture that appeals to, represents and engages with people who live, work, visit or study within the community.

Our Values

Our Values

Our values underpin this strategy. We will:

- Maximise opportunities to cherish, grow and promote our heritage to the local community and visitors.
- Recognise the importance of heritage, culture and creativity in:
 - Place shaping³ (creating a sense of place);
 - Economic growth and development, and;
 - Physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Celebrate the creativity and diversity of Wyre's communities and organisations.
- Use heritage and culture to drive innovation, partnerships and joint projects.
- Promote, support and create cultural events, activities and experiences to foster community, enjoyment and shared experiences.

³ Placeshaping is creating a place where people want to be, focussing on how space functions and improving the quality of life, fostering a sense of belonging and creating a vibrant and sustainable environment by engaging with the local community to shape its future.



What does success look like?

We will use a set of measures using quantitative and qualitative data, which will track progress and help us understand what impact the strategy is having.

Our goal is that we will ensure:

- Our natural and built heritage is sensitively nurtured, well-promoted and can be viewed and enjoyed by all, either in digital or physical form.
- That our heritage and cultural offer is perceived by local communities as high quality, interesting, fun, relevant, accessible and well-promoted.
- That heritage and cultural businesses, organisations, artists, and creatives feel connected, resilient and ambitious in commercial, charitable and voluntary sectors.
- Residents who have taken part in heritage or cultural activity feel their health, happiness and wellbeing have improved as a result.
- That children and young people feel they have ample opportunities to take part in heritage or cultural activities.
- More people work in the heritage and cultural industries, backed up by more training, skills and pathways to employment.
- That investment into heritage and culture through earned income, grants, sponsorship and philanthropy has increased.
- The number and diversity of visitors, audiences and participants in heritage, and culture activity has increased.
- That activities surrounding heritage and culture are helping to tackle issues surrounding climate change.

'I have made new friends and expanded my social circle, I have learnt so many new techniques which I've loved and would never have normally experienced and have kept a portfolio of the artwork I've created' – Wyre resident who has participated in a Creative Wellbeing Course.

Definitions

Short-Term – already underway or can be within 3-6 months via existing resources.

Medium-Term – To be undertaken within 3 years, requires additional planning, fundraising and resources including partnership working.

Long-Term – 3-10 year timescale for more complex work programmes.



Priority 1- Natural Heritage

‘Our coast and countryside is one of our biggest and most prized assets. As its custodian we have a duty to take care of it for future generations whilst providing a welcoming experience for everyone to enjoy’ – Coast and Countryside Team, Wyre Council.

Opportunity:

Establish Wyre as a progressive educator on the natural environment whilst leading the way on environmental protection, enhancement and creating a sustainable and positive visitor experience to better tell the story of the landscape and communities within it.

Commitments:

1. **Support the year round ‘Great Outdoors’ programme and other natural environment initiatives that connects people with our natural environment and inspires them to protect and enhance it. Potentially in collaboration with various landowners, The Canal and Rivers Trust and Lancaster Canal Trust and The Environment Agency and Fylde Coast partners.**



Actions:

1.1 Link with a range of nature, tourism and cultural organisations to understand the current offer and reinvigorate/enhance the existing year-round programme, connecting heritage, culture and nature where possible. **Timescale – Short**

1.2 Work in synergy with Wyre Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan as well as Key stakeholders and partners to engage in national conversations about climate change. Where possible enable and support awareness raising events in a range of public buildings and at key events and festivals. **Timescale – Short**

1.3 Invest in initiatives which work closely with communities in creative, innovative ways to connect local people with nature and the challenges we face in preserving it, especially within communities not currently engaging. **Timescale – Short**

2. Improve the environmental practices of the borough events, festivals and fairs. To establish them as leaders in sustainable event management.

Actions:

2.1 Work with partners to gather data to determine which communities are currently not engaging with events or initiatives relating to the natural heritage and improved environmental practices and develop a promotional programme with community groups and schools to encourage better and further engagement. **Timescale – Medium**

2.2 Work with partners to audit the environmental impact of the existing events, festival and fairs in the Borough. Work with the Climate Change and Coast and Countryside Teams to work on a plan to improve the environmental performance of these events. **Timescale – Medium**

3. Plan a better use of our Parks and Gardens, Wyre Estuary Country Park and Rossall Point by enhancing the heritage and culture offer at these locations.

Actions:

3.1 Working with appropriate teams and partners to consider alternative and enhanced uses, particularly focussing on heritage and cultural activities and events including an awareness raising promotional campaign. **Timescale – Medium**

Measuring Success:

- Number of partnership activities, initiatives or events supported or delivered.
- Number of heritage and culture activities and events developed and delivered at our locations.

Priority 2 – Built Heritage

'We need to be inviting enough, without losing our identity, to encourage more people to come and visit our heritage buildings and sites and we need to understand why they don't come' – The Rev'd Andrew Wilkinson – Vicar and Area Dean of Garstang.

Opportunity:

Protect, conserve, enhance and promote our historic buildings, structures, cemeteries and heritage infrastructure with the appropriate usage and activities within them which will better tell our heritage story and serve the communities within it. To adopt a creative, collaborative and innovative approach to heritage sustainability and thereby create a positive visitor experience.

Commitments:

1. **Work in partnership to develop programmes and projects to enhance and protect our existing heritage assets for visitors to understand, respect and enjoy.**

Actions:

1.1 Establish and manage a local heritage list (by which locally cherished and significant assets and collections are included), including procedures and mechanisms to manage and maintain the list. **Timescale – Short**

1.2 Develop a digital heritage hub (heritage collections website) to provide a central point of reference showcasing the buildings, sculptures, monuments, cemeteries and archive collections of Wyre's heritage. **Timescale – Medium**

1.3 Work with partners at key heritage sites open to the public such as listed buildings, museums, libraries, cemeteries etc, as well as educators to develop a programme of heritage interpretation and heritage-led learning opportunities for all ages ensuring they are accessible and their impact on young people can be evaluated. **Timescale – Medium**

1.4 Where possible develop an engagement programme to focus on our underused heritage assets across the Borough, for example the Upper and Lower Lighthouses in Fleetwood. **Timescale – Medium**

1.5 To be a central point for the collective Wyre Heritage Open Days Programme that would include both council run heritage sites, buildings, events and activities as well as those run by heritage trusts, organisations and volunteers. **Timescale – Short**

1.6 Work with the Fylde Coast Country Life Museum and its volunteers to help support their business model and digital archive development and help support any ongoing legacy plan. **Timescale – Long**

1.7 Work with Estates officers to develop and implement a refreshed approach to Community Asset Transfer. Ensuring that local groups and organisations are supported to take on and manage assets in a way that maximises community benefit, sustainability and transparency. **Timescale – Medium.**

1.8 Work with Planning and Conservation officers on policy and guidance, such as planning policies in the new Local Plan and conservation and design guidance documents taking into account the sensitivities around heritage buildings and monuments. Work together with key partners (like Heritage Trust North West) to consider any repurposing and renewal opportunities of significant heritage assets across the district. **Timescale – Long**

1.9 Work closely with the churches in Wyre, particularly those listed by Historic England. In partnership with church management, consider options for expanded use for the community and develop a robust promotional campaign of key heritage and culture events and activities that take place. Where possible explore cross promotion opportunities during events such as Heritage Open Days, or Gala Days and consider any joint heritage project opportunities in areas such as genealogy or social history that can attract national and international visitors. **Timescale – Long**

2. Harness and realise the potential of Mount Pavilion as a year-round heritage and culture venue.

Actions:

2.1 Work with partners to develop a commercially focussed, year-round programme of use relating to Mount Pavilion focusing on its heritage value and opportunities for creative and cultural activities. Reinvent and enhance the potential of Mount Pavilion as a wedding venue. **Timescale – Medium**

Measuring success:

- Number of heritage assets added to the digital heritage hub.
- Number of heritage and culture activities and events supported or delivered.
- Number of heritage assets with futures secured that are both sustainable and sensitive to their heritage significance.



Priority 3 – Culture and Creativity



'A strong Heritage and Cultural offer can bring people of all ages together to learn new skills and connect with each other to enjoy new fun experiences' – Lisa Wigham – Artist

Opportunity:

Establish new cultural products, partnerships and promotional activity to mutually benefit and grow the creative economies for our local communities and visitors.

Commitments:

- 1. Nurture existing collaborations and form new ones where possible to encourage the development of new cultural initiatives that can support growth within the cultural and creative sectors.**

Actions:

1.1 Link the cultural and creative sectors with recognised organisations to inform both the cultural industry and local communities and visitors about the local cultural offer. **Timescale – Short**

1.2 Support new cultural and creative product development to attract a variety of visitors throughout the year by working with key cultural partnerships to promote art and craft classes, performance art, traditional crafts, workshops, links with food, wellbeing, sustainability and nature. **Timescale – Short**

1.3 Work with the Canal and River Trust to consider the feasibility of developing a Canal Heritage or Cultural Project along the 4 mile stretch of Lancaster Canal from Barton/Bilsborrow to Garstang. **Timescale – Long**

1.4 Develop and invest in a heritage or cultural event/exhibition that will appeal to local people and has the potential to attract visitors from across the northwest. Such as the Fleetwood Fish, Food and Music Festival, Garstang Makers Market or a touring exhibition focussing on key local themes such as: family, women, fishing, agriculture, industry, tourism etc. **Timescale – Medium**

1.5 Develop The “Story of Transport in Wyre” project which would involve working with partners such as the Poulton and Wyre Railway Society (PWRS), local heritage societies and Fleetwood Museum to interpret and celebrate the history of the area’s diverse transport modes, including rail, sea, road and canal.

Timescale – Medium

- 2. Building on our current strengths, support and promote existing festivals, events, galas, agricultural shows and fairs which bring significant visitor spend and raise the profile of Wyre.**

Actions:

2.1 Work with independent promoters, our Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP), key arts and cultural organisations as well as other key groups to maximise the impact from notable events and festivals. Complement this with a joined up and robust marketing and communications plan to ensure maximum promotional coverage. **Timescale – Short**



3. Enhance and develop recognition of Wyre as a key filming location in Lancashire.

Actions:

3.1 Nurture the appetite for Wyre as a filming location by working with creative organisations such as the regional body Creative England 'Filming in England' to proactively identify and capitalise on any filming opportunities whilst maintaining a reasonable and monitored, 'open door policy' to any production companies who contact us speculatively. **Timescale – Medium**

3.2 Update and maintain Wyre's profile of district filming locations and buildings/structures on the database held by Creative England. **Timescale – Short**

3.3 Maintain and analyse annual local filming data to determine the success and popularity of filming in Wyre. This will support the allocation of funding and resources. **Timescale – Short**

Measuring success:

- Number of partnership activities, initiatives or events supported or delivered.
- Number of heritage and culture activities and events developed and delivered at our locations.
- Number of sites used for filming.

(Photo ©2022 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved.)



Priority 4 – Creative Place shaping

‘Preserve what we have, our buildings, our public spaces and our events to help keep our town centres and high streets vibrant and to give people a reason to want to come and visit and shop’ – Ian Sewart – Garstang Town Trust

Opportunity:

Using heritage and culture to develop vibrant, welcoming places where residents, visitors and creative practitioners feel inspired to live, work and spend time.

Commitments:

- 1. Focus on how space functions and integrates art and culture into community development by capitalising on a local community’s assets, inspiration and potential with the intention of creating public space that improves people’s health, happiness and well-being.**

Actions:

1.1 Map people, places, organisations and activities to determine the range of existing creative activities across Wyre and how they are promoted and funded. This will help consider gaps in provision and any joint partnership opportunities.

Timescale – Short

1.2 Foster a collaborative approach that involves understanding a places context, strengths and weaknesses with the aim of establishing local place-based heritage and cultural plans to deliver opportunities specific to our local towns. **Timescale – Short**

1.3 Develop a collaborative approach by which we can shape our public realm and high streets in order to maximise a shared vision which include the development of street art and murals, sculpture, sustainable planting, temporary pocket parks, pedestrianised areas and initiatives to improve active transport (walking, cycling etc) and access to nature. **Timescale – Long**

Measure success:

- Number of place-based plans, projects, activities or events supported or delivered.
- Increased levels of positive feedback from residents and organisations about places in Wyre.



Priority 5 – Connectivity

‘Apathy and disconnection from heritage and culture is a challenge we need to address’ – Rebecca Murdoch – Fleetwood Arts Partnership

Opportunity:

Work in partnership and as a network, connector and champion of the local heritage and culture sector. Support the sector to connect, work collectively, share best practice and lever investment through greater joint working.

Commitment:

1. **Extend the reach of the existing ‘Wyre Creative Network’ to include heritage. Support and promote the various local arts and culture networks and identify any gaps in provision.**



Actions:

1.1 Support and promote existing heritage and culture strategic partnerships and practitioners, such as Fleetwood Arts Partnership and Wyre Creative Network and any other partnerships where possible. **Timescale – Short**

1.2 Understand and utilise existing local heritage, culture and creative networks and champions that can be grown and promoted suitably and can offer a supporting role in the delivery of the Heritage and Culture Strategy. Identify any gaps in provision and investigate the feasibility of developing new networks that will connect across the Fylde Coast and beyond. **Timescale – Short**

1.3 Work with partners to establish needs and priorities in order to deliver a long-term communications and marketing plan for Heritage and Culture activities and events. This will help to proactively promote activities and projects that take place because of priorities identified within Heritage and Culture Strategy. **Timescale – Medium**

Measuring success:

- Number of partnership activities, initiatives or events supported or delivered.

Priority 6 – Creative Enterprise and Skills

‘Educators, practitioners and policymakers have a duty to make a career in the heritage and cultural sectors feel much more valued. Potential employers need to be ready to engage with future generations considering a career as part of the heritage and culture sectors’ – Matthew Guest – University of Lancashire (formerly University of Central Lancashire)

Opportunity:

Developing our heritage and culture sector to create a diverse and sustainable workforce and voluntary sector. Ensure the volunteer sector is supported and championed.

Commitments:

- 1. Develop opportunities for people of any age and in any location, particularly remote rural areas, to learn and apply heritage, creative and cultural skills.**

Actions:

1.1 Working with schools, colleges and training providers to forge stronger links between the heritage and culture sector and education providers to develop training opportunities to upskill a sustainable workforce. Areas include governance, business planning, digital transformation, fundraising and reducing carbon impact, as well as training in core heritage and creative skills such as producing events, interpretation and collections management, theatres skills, arts and crafts - including historic rural crafts and trade techniques, event organisation, management, funding, filming, production and media. **Timescale – Medium**

1.2 Work with volunteer recruitment teams to coordinate a programme of volunteering opportunities across a range of heritage and cultural organisations, thereby increasing capacity of the local heritage and culture sector. **Timescale – Short**

- 2. Find creative ways to use space, utilise vacant or underused spaces for creative activities.**

Actions:

2.1 Identify and work in partnership with local businesses to run pilot creative events in underused spaces. **Timescale – Long**

2.2 Work in partnership with Economic Development and Visitor Economy as well as local landlords to run a pilot scheme to enable artists and community groups to take short term 'peppercorn' leases on empty shops or spaces for use as studios, workshops or 'pop up' shops, galleries or community creative spaces.

Timescale – Long

3. Work with production companies to develop Wyre's fledgling film industry.

Actions:

3.1 Consider options to incentivise using Wyre as a filming location for major film productions. **Timescale – Medium**

3.2 Working with education providers as well as Creative England to consider the feasibility of offering a local grant fund to encourage young film makers to stay local and use us as their filming location of choice. This would further be incentivised by the opportunity to use our key buildings, such as Mount Pavilion or Market House Studios as workspace or as an 'artist in residence' opportunity.

Timescale – Long

3.3 Work with partners to consider forming a Lancashire or Fylde Coast based film office that can offer masterclasses and workshops for people in the industry as well as be a base for any production enquiries. **Timescale – Long**

Measuring success:

- Number of skills and creative activities, initiatives or events supported or delivered.
- Number of volunteering opportunities supported.
- Number of initiatives with film makers and industry stakeholders.



Priority 7 – New Places for Heritage and Culture

'We need to prioritise heritage and culture that goes to the community, especially to those less engaged and in remote locations' Kirsten Squirrel – Garstang Library

Opportunity:

Ensure all residents and visitors can experience heritage and culture in their local areas (even in the most remote rural areas) so it becomes a source of pride to local people and attractive for people to visit.

Commitments:

- 1. Strengthen and further develop the activities and heritage buildings in Fleetwood's Heritage and Cultural Quarter.**

Actions:

1.1 Link with Future Fleetwood and key stakeholders to audit and understand current provision, local needs and opinions to shape a delivery plan for the Heritage and Cultural Quarter. **Timescale – Short**

1.2 Facilitate a collaborative approach between key stakeholders to develop an appealing Heritage and Culture Programme focussing on activities taking place in the Heritage and Cultural Quarter and its buildings. **Timescale – Medium**

- 2. Promote Market House Studios as a creative and business hub as part of the Heritage and Cultural Quarter.**

Actions:

2.1 The Market House Studios to develop a programme of events, activities and workshops that is informed by the vision and the needs of the Heritage and Cultural Quarter. **Timescale – Medium**

2.2 Work with partners to develop and better utilise Market House Studios and Gallery Space to become a more commercial and sustainable creative space that appeals to a variety of creatives to use as a working base. **Timescale – Short**

2.3 Work with partners to develop a proactive and targeted approach to hiring out the community and gallery spaces at Market House Studios that includes working with local groups, educators, agencies, businesses and individuals. **Timescale – Short**

2.4 Implement the Market House Studios Business Plan supported by Comms who will advise on marketing options. **Timescale – Short**

2.5 Property and Development team to consider options for a complete change of use for Market House Studios to a commercial use, preferably within the heritage/culture/leisure sectors. **Timescale – Medium.**

3. Integrate cultural spaces and opportunities into community spaces, with a particular focus on our remote rural towns and villages.

Actions:

3.1 Work with local communities, libraries, parish and town councils, creative communities and community organisations to understand the type of heritage and culture offer they would like to see in their towns, and villages with the aim of developing a heritage or cultural offer that is co-designed/developed with local residents themselves. **Timescale – Short**

4. Consider the feasibility of creating a Wyre Heritage and Culture Hub that includes heritage, wellbeing and creative activities in key towns.

Actions:

4.1 Support opportunities for community management and use of vacant high street premises; facilitate pop-ups and temporary use initiatives for community groups, small businesses, start-ups, heritage, culture and wellbeing partnerships and organisations. **Timescale – Medium**

4.2 Consider the options for creating a mobile heritage and culture ‘pop-up’, marquee, vehicle or ‘centre’ which can be taken to hard-to-reach communities such as rural locations or communities who have little interaction with heritage and culture, to therefore experience and take part in heritage and cultural activities. This facility could then also used as a library, mobile museum, art gallery, and arts and crafting hub, this would be done in partnership with local organisations. It could also be used at local events such as galas, fetes, agricultural fairs and community days. The aim would be to reach perceived ‘unreachable’ communities. **Timescale – Medium**

Measuring success:

- Number of place-based plans, projects, activities or events supported or delivered.



Priority 8 – Heritage and Cultural Leadership

'The pandemic gave society an understanding of what it was like to lose the opportunity to experience heritage and culture in a venue and to share the experience of laughter, knowledge and entertainment. A stark warning of what a world would be like without heritage and culture in it' Dean Stewart – Marine Hall, Fleetwood.

Opportunity:

Spearhead change by bringing together a diverse range of partners to drive forward and advocate for the Heritage and Culture Strategy and where possible secure funding for an agreed ambitious programme of Heritage and Culture projects led through partnership and a clear plan of investment.

Commitment:

1. **Provide leadership to drive the Strategy forward and to bring partners/stakeholders onboard.**

Actions:

1.1 Establish and grow the Heritage and Culture Working Group as a steering group to lead the Strategy, including on collaborative projects and shared funding bids. **Timescale – Short**

1.2 Integrate the Heritage and Culture Strategy objectives and actions into wider Council Plans, Town Centre Partnership programming plans, staff work and resource planning to understand where resources are available and where gaps remain. **Timescale – Medium**

1.3 Establish a Cultural Compact partnership of relevant external stakeholders that would feed into the Heritage and Culture Working Group that would work on collaborative funding bids and projects. **Timescale – Medium**

1.4 Join with coastal authorities, neighbouring stakeholders and those leading on major projects such as the Eden North, Harris Museum and Lancashire Museum Service to seize opportunities to promote and develop alongside these projects. **Timescale - Medium**

Measuring success:

- Number of heritage and culture activities and events developed and delivered at our locations.



Priority 9 – Capturing Value

‘We should never underestimate the value and importance of Heritage and Culture, participation can help with wellbeing and the economic prosperity of a town’ – Tina Dempsey – Artist.

Opportunity:

Monitor and evaluate any change that heritage and culture has on people and place to ensure continuous improvement and learning.

Commitments:

1. **Develop a single evaluation process that captures the social, economic, environmental and health and wellbeing value of culture, enabling advocacy for the sector as a whole.**

Actions:

1.1 Work with The Local Government Association (LGA), Marketing Lancashire, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England and other regional partners to explore tools available for measuring the impact across Wyre heritage and cultural organisations. **Timescale – Medium**

Appendix A.

With grateful thanks to all our consultees:

The residents, communities and visitors of Wyre who took part in the online Wyre Council Survey from April to December 2025.

There were a number of one-to-one consultations for the Heritage and Culture Strategy with key stakeholders and sector professionals.

Sophie Adamson	Fleetwood Museum
Alison Boden	Coast and Countryside Team
Julian Brent	Fleetwood Market
Mick Briggs	Fylde Country Life Museum
Lesley Compton	Arts, Health and Wellbeing
Karen Cumpsty	Fleetwood Library
Margaret Daniels & Yvonne Johnstone	Fleetwood Civic Society
Tina Dempsey	Independent Artist
Jennifer Evans	Poulton Library
Heather Fox Museums	Lancashire County Council Heritage and
Matthew Guest	University of Lancashire (formerly UCLAN)
Lynne and Gordon Harter	Garstang Heritage Trail and Town Trust
The Rev'd Martin Keighley	St. Chad's Church
Charlie McKeith	Architect
Rebecca Murdoch	Fleetwood Arts Partnership
Leah Newton	Wyre Conservation Officer
Adrian Pritchard	Market House Studios
Mary Randles & Peter Ryder	Garstang and District Historical Society
Ian Sewart	Garstang Town Trust
Dean Stewart	Marine Hall, Fleetwood
Kirsten Squirrell	Garstang Library
Sarah Welsh	Poulton Community Hall
Lisa Wigham	Independent Artist
The Rev'd Andrew Wilkinson	St. Michael's and St Helen's Churches
Lynda Wright	Poulton Historical and Civic Society