

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

20 June 2024

Report by Director of Education

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL CULTURAL STRATEGY 2024 - 2029

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the draft Cultural Strategy 2024-2029.

RECOMMENDATION

2. Cabinet is asked to comment on and approve the draft Cultural Strategy 2024- 2029.

BACKGROUND

3. In 2015 East Renfrewshire Council approved the Arts Strategy which has now expired. This strategy replaces it and sets out the vision and strategic direction for our arts and heritage over the next five years. It builds upon the transformative work already undertaken to enhance and embed a strong cultural identity in East Renfrewshire.

4. The East Renfrewshire Cultural Strategy 2024-2029 is aligned with and will contribute to and support the East Renfrewshire Outcome Delivery Plan, Community Plan and Fairer EastRen Plan and its outcomes.

5. It aligns closely to the aims of The Scottish Government's [Cultural Strategy for Scotland](#) published in 2020 and is underpinned by its guidelines and targets for cultural engagement and celebration. The strategy also closely aligns with the current [Creative Scotland Strategic Framework](#).

REPORT

6. The draft Cultural Strategy 2024 – 2029 is attached as Appendix 1.

7. The strategy links to the key themes of the Cultural Strategy for Scotland through focussing on the following key themes:

- Access and Participation
- Excellence
- Sustainability

8. Recognition is given to the impact that Covid-19 had on how the Arts and Heritage team adapted practice to include the creative use of digital resources and provide 'at home' experiences.

9. The Strategy builds upon the work of the previous version and reflects East Renfrewshire's demographics in order to meet the needs of different groups of East Renfrewshire Residents and in particular:

- Children and Young People;
- Older People;
- Families from Low Income Households;
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups;
- Vulnerable Children and Care Experienced Young People; and,
- People with Disabilities/Additional Support Needs.

FINANCE & EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

10. There are no financial implications to this Strategy. Resourcing of Arts and Heritage – including savings or efficiencies - is addressed as part of the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Management Fee in relation to the Service Agreement and the agreed Change Control Procedure.

11. Capital investment decisions are aligned with the draft Cultural Strategy 2024- 2029 and prioritise the development of the new Eastwood Park Theatre and Leisure Centre and as such the strategy supports the longer term development of the professional theatre programme and visual arts service.

12. The impact of the Strategy will be monitored and measured through the performance of ERCL. Progress will be reflected in monitoring and self-evaluation processes, and the scrutiny of the Trust performance brought to Council. In addition, the performance of arts and heritage is scrutinised at Trust Board level through a balanced scorecard approach. The timeframe over which the actions will be taken forward is the four year period 2024-2029.

CONSULTATION

13. The East Renfrewshire Cultural Strategy 2024-2029 has been developed in consultation with local and national partners and stakeholders to ensure maximisation of the potential impact of arts and heritage for the learning, development and health and wellbeing of the whole community.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

14. A key element of the strategy is the emphasis on partnership working. These partnerships enable ERCL to deliver its services and also promotes, enables and supports partnerships with other organisations in order to meet their aims and objectives. Key partners include:

- East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure services
- East Renfrewshire Council
- East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership
- Scottish Government
- Creative Scotland
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STRATEGY

15. In developing this strategy an equalities, fairness and rights impact assessment (EFRIA) has been carried out and evaluated the proposal as having: no adverse impacts; the potential to advance equality and foster good relationships; and the potential to advance children's rights.

16. A Climate Change Impact Assessment (CCIA) has been completed and has been found to have no relevant impacts (positive or negative).

CONCLUSION

17. The East Renfrewshire Cultural Strategy 2024-2029 replaces the previous Arts Strategy and sets out the vision and strategic direction for the next 5 years.

RECOMMENDATION

18. Cabinet is asked to comment on and approve content of the draft East Renfrewshire Cultural Strategy 2024-2029.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
20 June 2024

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Appendices

1. East Renfrewshire Cultural Strategy 2024-29

east renfrewshire
CULTURE
and
LEISURE

CULTURAL
STRATEGY
2024-29



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**CULTURE
and
LEISURE**



Introduction

East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCL) Arts and Heritage Team has developed this Cultural Strategy 2024 – 2029 on behalf of East Renfrewshire Council (ERC).

A comprehensive consultation period has allowed ERCL to create a strategy that encompasses robust actions, outcomes and measures to help facilitate engagement, participation, promotion and development of Arts and Heritage services for East Renfrewshire.

The strategy will be delivered by ERCL's Arts and Heritage team, who sit within the Communities and Arts department. Over the strategy timeline, the team will continue to actively link with internal departments, ERC services and corporate partners to ensure the success of the strategy over the five year period.

Executive Summary

The Arts and Heritage service will strive to build upon the transformative work already undertaken by the team to enhance and embed a strong cultural identity for East Renfrewshire.

We will do this by providing high quality cultural opportunities across East Renfrewshire whilst focusing on our key strategic themes of:

Access and Participation

Sustainability

Excellence



Creativity enriches all our lives and tells the world who we are. It expresses who we are, challenges us, entertains us and makes us think. It has the power to transform us, to take us away from the everyday and to enjoy being alive. It can also inspire us to participate in creative endeavour, to become artists or creators ourselves.

(Creative Scotland, 2020)



Access and Participation

- Enable, support and sustain high quality Arts and Heritage provision within East Renfrewshire
- Encourage individuals with little or no experience to take part in cultural activity locally
- Widen access to those who are socially or geographically isolated or economically disadvantaged
- Engage with local communities and empower them to participate without barriers
- Recognise our role within a tourism/destination context for East Renfrewshire.



Sustainability

- Forge and maintain creative relationships that inform and develop our organisation and enhance our reputation within the sector
- Develop opportunities to generate profitable income which will sustain and support charitable aspects of the service
- Recognise and promote the impact on wellbeing of participating in Arts and Heritage activities and successfully evaluate and evidence the impact
- Consider environmental impact within our planning and implement adaption to ensure our service is future proof.



Excellence

- Seek out and promote artistic excellence and cultural experiences
- Produce an outstanding professional programme of activities and events for audiences and participants to benefit from
- Enhance learning and development opportunities for professionals, amateurs/hobbyists, residents and our young people
- Embed opportunities for growth in excellence through planning (particularly the new Eastwood Park Theatre and leisure centre development).

We will do this primarily through our existing services:

- Theatre and Performing Arts (professional programme, workshops, training and community theatre)
- Visual Arts (classes, exhibitions, community projects and public art)
- Heritage Services (local collections and digital resources, classes, exhibitions and events).

We will also work with partners to explore opportunities to broaden our offer, utilising their expertise in particular areas to develop new programmes and projects that support our strategy outcomes.

Photo credit: National Theatre Live, 2023 Life of Pi - Hiran Abeysekera (Pi) and Richard Parker the Tiger 1. Photo by Johan Persson.

Our Local Context

The Arts and Heritage provision for East Renfrewshire Council has been delivered through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) by East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCL) since July 2015. This strategy sets our joint direction and will inform our decision making over the next five years to 2029.

Our learning and experience gained from the pandemic meant we adopted new ways of delivering our services and staying in close contact. We built a trust with our customers that ensured the local community continued to benefit from arts and heritage provision within East Renfrewshire during those difficult times. Our customers continue to be at the heart of all that we do; we move forward into this new strategy on a firm footing and with their continued support.

Our Work

The Arts & Heritage Team deliver an ambitious and diverse year round programme of live theatre performances, live streaming and encore screenings, exhibitions, talks, workshops, guided walks, films, festivals, classes and activities for children and adults that attracted over 36000 attendances in 2022-2023.

The Head of Communities and Arts is supported by a committed and dedicated team composed of 2.5 FTE Development Officers, 0.9 FTE Local Studies Librarian, 1 FTE Technical Theatre Manager and 3 FTE Theatre Technicians, supported by a bank of casual Technicians and front of house team who work in collaboration with departments across ERCL to ensure the success of the service delivery. Staff regularly participate in CPD, training opportunities and networking within the sector to further their knowledge and skills, as well as when required to link in with specific initiatives.

As we are the only service provider of its kind in East Renfrewshire, the service plays a vital role in enabling and facilitating audiences of all ages with high quality Arts and Heritage activities, creative learning opportunities and theatre performances.

Our Recovery

At the initial closure of our in-person services due to Covid-19, the Arts and Heritage team worked to respond to our customers' needs by creating a range of opportunities for 'at home' engagement with our services. Since the gradual resumption of our in-person services, we have evaluated the ways and means we can re-engage and work with our service users. We have utilised our learnings from the period to adapt our creative practice and this will continue during the lifetime of this strategy, including the expansion of digital resources.

Our Future

Our team have contributed to the planned development of the new Eastwood Park Theatre and Leisure Centre, with building due to commence within the lifetime of this strategy. As such, this strategy supports the longer-term development of the professional theatre programme and visual arts service that will be delivered in the new building, ensuring financial sustainability for the new facilities. We have worked closely with architects and theatre consultants to ensure the facilities will be able to accommodate key and improved technical theatre requirements. This will allow development of our offering and increase opportunities for engagement with service-users.

Our East Renfrewshire

Scotland is a place where culture is valued, protected and nurtured. Culture is woven through everyday life, shapes and is shaped by society, and its transformative potential is experienced by everyone. Scotland's rich cultural heritage and creativity of today is inspired by people and place, enlivens every community and is celebrated around the world.

(Scottish Government, 2020)



East Renfrewshire's Vision for the Future

Vision for the Future is East Renfrewshire's overarching long-term vision- our North Star. Within this will sit our Community Plan. Vision for the Future is currently in development and will be a living and evolving document, with three key pillars, under which are ambitions and priorities will be set;

1. Our children and young people flourish-

with equity of access to culture, leisure and sports facilities and activities.

2. Our communities and places thrive -

a distinct positive identity for local areas, supported by infrastructure including green spaces, facilities and connectivity. Climate change is an overarching priority, and wellbeing, community wealth-building and place-making key objectives.

3. We all live well-

where prevention and early intervention are integral to our services and everyone can live and age well, reinforcing East Renfrewshire as a place of wellbeing, with long life expectancies and positive connections



East Renfrewshire Council's Community Plan 2018-2028

The Community Plan will evolve through Vision for the Future however the current plan focuses on five outcomes. The Arts and Heritage service is perfectly positioned to actively and positively contribute to the community plan by offering targeted opportunities for engagement for those working, visiting and living in East Renfrewshire. We will sharpen our focus on inequalities working with our corporate partners within council departments, HSCP and Education to help support the Community Plan Outcomes:

- All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure childhood and succeed
- East Renfrewshire residents are healthy and active and have the skills for learning, life and work
- East Renfrewshire is a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for residents and businesses
- East Renfrewshire residents are safe and live in supportive communities
- Older people and people with long term conditions in East Renfrewshire are valued; their voices are heard and they enjoy full and positive lives.

Our vision for East Renfrewshire is an attractive and thriving place to grow up, work, visit, raise a family and enjoy later life.

(East Renfrewshire Council, 2018)

FAIRER East Ren

Fairer East Ren, which is the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, focuses on reducing inequality across groups and communities in East Renfrewshire. Within the five strategic outcomes of the Community plan are specific themed delivery areas as below. Our Arts and Heritage Strategy will contribute towards addressing these themes through our provision and targeted engagement towards more disadvantaged groups

- Child poverty in East Renfrewshire is reduced (Local Child Poverty Action Report)
- Residents have the right skills, learning opportunities and confidence to secure and sustain work
- East Renfrewshire's transport links are accessible, attractive and seamless
- Residents' mental health and wellbeing is improved
- Residents are safe and socially connected within their communities

We recognise and support the outcomes identified in East Renfrewshire Council Education Department's [Local Improvement Plan 2024–2027](#); Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellence and East Renfrewshire's [Children and Young People's Services Plan 2023-2026](#); At Our Heart – The Next Steps.

East Renfrewshire Council Equality Outcomes

A member of our team is embedded within ERCs Equality Officer Working Group. The following outcomes were identified for 2021-2025, and we will continue to enforce and support these in our planning, creative practice, product development and delivery as well as through training opportunities for staff to increase advocacy and awareness.

- Minority Ethnic residents are represented in public life and have their needs recognised and addressed in decision making
- Minority ethnic, disabled and younger residents are able to access services and feel connected to their communities
- Domestic abuse survivors are protected from harm and abuse
- The mental health and well-being of LGBT+ children and young people is improved
- The diversity of East Renfrewshire Council workforce at all levels better reflects the local population
- Younger residents and disabled residents are able to participate and are supported to sustain good quality employment opportunities



East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Business Plan

As the key delivery partner for this strategy, East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure will integrate and align the strategy with its' Business Plan and its' five strategic aims:

- Create a financially sustainable business model
- Develop an understanding of our customers and audiences and an offer than attracts them
- Develop a strong, diverse, resilient and committed workforce
- Establishing ERCLs role at the heart of vibrant communities
- Developing resilient, dynamic and productive partnerships that are developed and nurtured.

The following four key customer segments have been identified as a target market for East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure services:

- **Parents of young children**
- **Children in young families (under 16 years)**
- **Older adults (over 60 years)**
- **Young adults (16-25 years)**

East Renfrewshire's population is predicted to grow by 7.6% by 2026, more than double the Scottish rate of growth. This will increase demand for our services particularly for children and young people and over 65s, who have been identified as the two groups that will grow the most due to more families moving into the area and increased life expectancies. Developing programmes aimed at these customers will be a key priority.

East Renfrewshire is one of the most affluent areas in Scotland, with more than half (60%) of East Renfrewshire's residents living in the 'least deprived' communities across Scotland according to the SIMD. However, 6,600 people are income deprived with almost a 50/50 split between the Levern Valley and Eastwood areas despite the Eastwood area having a higher population.

27.3% of residents in East Renfrewshire have a long-term health condition or disability that significantly limits their day to day activities.

We will improve access to our programme and services and encourage our customers to recognise the positive impact that engagement with Arts and Heritage can have on wellbeing.





The Strategic Context

Our strategic themes align with The Scottish Government's [Cultural Strategy for Scotland](#) published in 2020 and our service provision is underpinned by its guidelines and targets for cultural engagement and celebration.

The Scottish Government and our public sector partners support the sector by advocating, championing, investing, and brokering relationships within the sector and with wider industry. We want to ensure that public sector support is used in a strategic way, achieving the best long term outcomes.

(Scottish Government, 2020)

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT STRATEGY	ERCL STRATEGIC THEME
<p>Empowering Through Culture</p> <p>Celebrating culture as part of every community; essential to our lives and wellbeing</p>	<p>Access and Participation</p>
<p>Strengthening Culture</p> <p>Sustaining and nurturing culture to flourish and to evolve as a diverse, positive force in society, across all of Scotland</p>	<p>Excellence</p>
<p>Transforming Through Culture</p> <p>Demonstrating that culture is central to Scotland's wellbeing and cultural, social, economic and environmental prosperity</p>	<p>Sustainability</p>

A Culture Strategy for Scotland National Performance Framework

Our strategy is further influenced by national initiatives from Creative Scotland and sits within the current [Creative Scotland Strategic Framework](#).

Our professional Performing Arts programme will link closely with companies awarded funding through Creative Scotland's Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance; providing opportunities for professional companies to perform their work at our range of venues including Eastwood Park Theatre, Community Halls and supported outdoor spaces.

We will continue to programme and seek funding opportunities that allow us to celebrate opportunities to connect with Scottish events and festivals as well as curate our own internally, continuing our development and promotion of both arts and heritage themed activities and projects, such as our Scotland Inspires programme in 2024. These are projects that local residents can participate and benefit from, as well as linking in with the wider tourism opportunities from engaging with regional and national initiatives and the corresponding positive economic impact for East Renfrewshire.





Heritage

Our Heritage Service will link with key national strategies to preserve and celebrate our unique local heritage; 'Our Past, Our Future, 2023-28', Historic Environment Scotland; Forward: Scotland's Public Library Strategy 2021-2025; as well as reference to Scotland's Museums and Galleries Strategy (Museums Galleries Scotland).

Our local heritage gives us a sense of connection. It might be to a community, a place, or a shared past. Our heritage reflects different viewpoints across cultures and generations. It is key to our local distinctiveness and identity.

(Scottish Government, 2020)



Our Strategic Themes

Strategic Theme 1: Access and Participation

The team are committed to explore and develop opportunities that support the continuation and increased inclusivity within our service. We will expand and grow our BSL interpretation offer as part of our professional theatre programme, strive to make our venues as accessible as possible to our deaf customers through further staff training and link with the BSL Plan for East Renfrewshire Council, as well as support the Scottish Government's British Sign Language (BSL): National Plan 2023 to 2029.

We will increase our performances and film screenings which are adapted for those with additional support needs (ASN); companies who deliver our professional theatre programme will be contracted to offer relaxed performances and engagement activity for ASN customers where suitable. We will develop target audiences to increase engagement levels with these groups over the period of the strategy.

Our Arts & Heritage programme will increase delivery across East Renfrewshire; redirecting the focus from just Eastwood Park complex/Giffnock Heritage Centre to a wider geographical area, utilising other venues and resources with East Renfrewshire. This will increase the provision of activity taking place in areas of the lowest SIMD status. The programme will seek to better reflect the cultural diversity of the area and engage various communities in our arts and heritage provision. We will relaunch our single seats campaign for our theatre programme, working with and welcoming socially isolated customers to our venues.

As Corporate Parents aligned to keeping The Promise, we will support and encourage increased participation of Children and Young People through initiatives such as East Renfrewshire For Your Entertainment (FYE) scheme by working more closely with HSCP colleagues to promote engagement in the scheme. Children and young people registered with the scheme receive free access to activities and events delivered by ERCL through their engagement with social work. We will increase links with Care Experienced Young People.

We support equal opportunities for people across Scotland to lead a cultural life of their choice with all aspects of cultural engagement – formal and informal – available to them regardless of age, socioeconomic background, gender, ethnicity, race, language, disability or sexuality.

(Scottish Government, 2020)

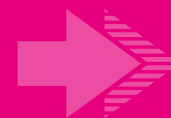
We will increase access to heritage via our online collections catalogue and our heritage website, allowing customers to explore the benefits and opportunities that digital technology can bring to widening access and linking with the systems and knowledge of our libraries colleagues to add value for service-users.

Whilst providing a service for residents within East Renfrewshire, we will also contribute to the area's tourism by programming events and activities that appeal to wider audiences and visitors, contributing to local economic development and supporting Scotland's events strategy Scotland the Perfect Stage and the national tourism industry strategy Scotland Outlook 2030.



ACTION:

Expansion of Visual and Performing Arts classes including term-time and holiday programme



CURRENT POSITION:

ERCL runs nine regular children's and six regular adults classes during the school terms, with children's holiday activities including week-long camps delivered at the spring and summer holidays.

OUTCOMES:

- An expansion of the classes program will provide better access across our communities with more opportunity to participate and experience performing and visual arts classes.

MEASURES:

- Number of regular term-time classes and holiday camps offered increases
- Income generated from expansion of programme increases
- Number of participants engaged in classes increases; better geographical spread of attendances
- Participation across programme is 85% or higher
- Participant evaluations record improved health and wellbeing as a result of attendance at classes.

Culture can improve the life chances of all people at every stage in their life. In Scotland, culture can be an important element to help reduce poverty and mitigate its impacts.

(Scottish Government, 2020)

ACTION:

Develop programme for young carers in East Renfrewshire in connection with ERC's Carers Service to help provide respite, offer opportunities for them to socialise, have fun and develop their skills.



CURRENT POSITION:

We do not currently offer a programme specifically for young carers (approx.150 with East Renfrewshire Carer's Centre).

OUTCOMES:

- Young Carer's participating and engaging with our programme
- Positive impact on young carers attending classes and performances
- Supporting health, wellbeing and development of young carers.

MEASURES:

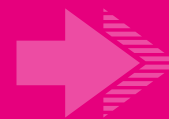
- Minimum 10% of registered young carers registered in East Renfrewshire engaged in programme on regular basis
- Young carers attending complete evaluation to confirm improved wellbeing
- External funding received through successful application to support delivery of programme.

93% of the Scottish population believes that creative activity is essential for children and young people's learning and well-being.

(Scottish Opinion Survey 56 Degree Insight, 2020)

ACTION:

Increased opportunities for participation in heritage classes and events



CURRENT POSITION:

ERCL runs a heritage programme throughout the year including local history walks, family and local history classes, school visits, displays and exhibitions.

OUTCOMES:

- More opportunities offered to participate in heritage activities which promote wellbeing and improve mental health
- More opportunities offered to participants to become better connected to local collections, landscapes and stories.

MEASURES:

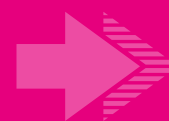
- Number of activities on offer is increased
- Range of activities is increased and geographical spread widened
- Participant feedback indicates a positive impact on wellbeing, mental health and a better connection to the local collections, landscapes and stories.

Our local heritage gives us a sense of connection. It might be to a community, a place, or a shared past. Our heritage reflects different viewpoints across cultures and generations. It is key to our local distinctiveness and identity.

(Historic Environment Scotland, 2023)

ACTION:

Management of the Heritage Collection to make it more accessible



CURRENT POSITION:

Only a small part of our Heritage Collection is currently accessible at the Heritage Centre, with the majority stored at the Bothy in Eastwood Park and some at Thornliebank Depot. Some of our collection is also accessed digitally through our website.

OUTCOMES:

- Online collections redesigned and updated, increasing opportunities for digital access
- Heritage collections at the Bothy moved to a new facility at Eastwood Culture and Leisure Headquarters; collections better cared for and preserved
- Improve public access to facilities.

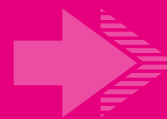
MEASURES:

- More items catalogued and accessible through the online catalogue
- Increase in numbers of physical visitors to the Heritage Centre and Headquarters
- Increase in numbers engaging with Heritage Service
- An improved storage facility has been created.

Through the discovery of the heritage collection, I have been able to use existing skills, develop new skills and learn about our local heritage. It has been fascinating to learn about the objects... resulting in a finished product to share with others on Portal to the Past. Our research, our legacy, our heritage!

(ERCL Heritage Volunteer, 2019)

ACTION:
Expansion of Heritage volunteer programme



CURRENT POSITION:

ERCL Heritage Service has six regular volunteers, many sourced and trained as part of the Beyond 2020: Community Reflections project, delivered in partnership with ERCL's Library Service.

OUTCOMES:

- Legacy of Beyond 2020: Community Reflections project continues
- More opportunities created for volunteers to assist with collection work
- More opportunities created for volunteers to assist with community activities and events
- Volunteers have access to a range of experiences offering opportunities to learn and develop skills
- Volunteers feel supported, valued and recognised for their contribution.

MEASURES:

- Increased number of volunteers
- Long-term volunteers (over 12 months service)
- Increase in the number of hours of volunteering recorded
- Collection work carried out by volunteered recorded
- Volunteers' experience of the programme evaluated and recorded, reporting positive feedback.



Frances has volunteered with our Arts and Heritage service since 2022. Having retired from the police service, she was looking for something to keep her body and mind active. Frances responded to our shout out to volunteer as an interviewer for ERCL's Beyond 2020: Community Reflections oral history project. "It was a fantastic experience. Being able to listen and record them [participants], seemed to me cathartic for them on quite a few occasions. They had been listened to and understood. Completely. I felt that I not only got my own mental health back on the right track, but had in my own way, helped those individuals. Volunteering can take on many shapes and forms, but this had to be one of the best ways to experience it." Following the Beyond 2020: Community Reflections project, Frances has continued to a much valued volunteer at other ERCL Arts and Heritage Service Events.

ACTION:

Further develop relaxed performances, BSL translated performances and inclusion of accessible theatre performances in programme

**CURRENT POSITION:**

ERCL has introduced BSL interpreted performances, captioned screenings and relaxed performances for its professional programme and has incorporated these into the annual co-produced pantomime. Performances for those living with dementia have also taken place.

OUTCOMES:

- Recognition and reputation as a facility that caters for those with enhanced accessibility needs
- Staff training developed with industry experts/production companies ensuring audience and performers are supported.

MEASURES:

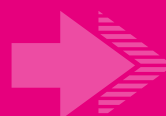
- Increased number of performances adapted for specific audiences
- Increased ASN attendances at corresponding performances
- All front of house staff trained in basic BSL communication.

BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, and equal opportunities to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and deaf culture with the people of Scotland.

(Scottish Government, 2023)

ACTION:

Develop funded programme for Care Experienced young people in East Renfrewshire to encourage regular or occasional participation in activities

**CURRENT POSITION:**

ERCL runs a number of classes and workshops for young people, supporting the Scottish Government's 'The Promise', however few Care Experienced young people attend, and significantly less engage in arts activities compared to our sports service. Previous initiatives have seen a number of Care Experienced young people attend theatre performances as our guests.

OUTCOMES:

- Better uptake of our FYE programme
- Develop and support a group of Care Experienced young people who will use our Arts and Heritage service.

MEASURES:

- Increased number of Care Experienced young people engaging in our service through the FYE scheme
- % attending programme comparable with other departments in ERCL; target of 70% sustaining attendance beyond 12 weeks at term-time activities
- Focus group facilitated to ensure needs are understood and activities are appropriate and relevant to their interests.

ACTION:

Research, evaluation, development and establishment of Community Arts Network in East Renfrewshire



CURRENT POSITION:

There are a number of professional and amateur arts and crafts groups and artists within East Renfrewshire who engage in artistic activity within our community facilities, private halls and studios.

OUTCOMES:

- Support grassroots engagement with arts and crafts
- Feed into and promote links with our professional visual arts programme
- Foster a wider recognition for creative talent within East Renfrewshire and a place to engage in culture
- Cataloguing of activities, groups and independents in the area
- Creation of network/linking with existing networks and online resources for groups and individuals
- Regular meetings to link artistic activity within East Renfrewshire
- Artists, crafters and local groups feel better supported and empowered
- Links with Scottish Government's Culture Strategy; Creative Communities programme.

MEASURES:

- Creation of network comparable to that of ERCL's Community Sports
- Online webpages hosted at ercultureandleisure.org with support and resources for groups and individuals
- Quarterly networking meetings established
- Feasibility study conducted to assess benefits of 'Open Studios' weekend/Community Arts event
- Increased attendances at our professional visual arts programme through signposting.

Art can help promote and foster citizenship, encouraging people to participate in their communities and have the confidence to take the lead and effect change. This is particularly important for those who feel disenfranchised: access to art and creativity can encourage agency which can, in turn, lead to action. The arts, therefore, play a pivotal role in championing people to participate in and change the world they live in.

(Our Creative Voice, 2022)



ACTION:**Develop diverse audiences attending theatre performances regularly****CURRENT POSITION:**

Audience data highlights areas of East Renfrewshire's population we currently engage with on a regular basis and those we do not currently reach.

OUTCOMES:

- Targeted shows throughout the programme to attract attendances from audiences identified as underrepresented
 - Better representation of East Renfrewshire's communities at theatre performances
 - Geographical barriers to attendance removed through use of non-traditional theatre spaces for performances.
-

MEASURES:

- Increased understanding of audience data
- Increased attendances from new audiences increasingly reflects the demographics within East Renfrewshire
- Positive feedback from communities regarding their engagement with the theatre and its programme.

ACTION:**Increase attendances at events held within lower SIMD areas****CURRENT POSITION:**

We have minimal uptake at events held within East Renfrewshire's lowest SIMD areas (around 7% of East Renfrewshire's population is classed as income deprived).

OUTCOMES:

- Support our corporate partners; reducing the impact of child poverty is a central outcome of East Renfrewshire Council's Community Plan
 - Seek and apply for funding to support subsidised event costs
 - Build on the success of our Warm Spaces funded programme in Thornliebank (winter 2022/2023)
 - Promote/engage children on FYE programme within these areas to attend existing activities within programmes; regular, sustained engagement at these activities.
-

MEASURES:

- Increased FYE attendances at programmes to compare with levels of engagement at ERCL's community sports programme
- Sustained engagement from 70% FYE participants of target attendance 12 weeks +
- Increase attendances from low SIMD residents.



Our Strategic Themes

Strategic Theme 2: Excellence

We will provide opportunities to nurture talent and continue to deliver a programme that provides access to Arts & Heritage for all ages and for those looking to pursue leisure activities or to further their skills.

We will work with partners in schools and organisations to encourage those looking to pursue a career in the creative industries. We will expand upon the delivery of our NPA Technical Theatre (SQA Level 6) to create further opportunities for course participants to achieve a professional qualification, supported by the context of delivery within a live working theatre, to create opportunities for their career progression.

We will continue to offer our customers high quality theatre via the professional theatre programme and live screenings, brought to us through several partners such as National Theatre Live and Royal Opera House. We will engage with production companies that have been awarded Creative Scotland's Touring Fund and attract new and innovative work by building on our reputation as a professional receiving house. We will expand upon the digital technologies we have invested in for our theatre.

We will further support research and development opportunities where we can foster our relationships with the Scottish theatre industry; continuing membership and contribution to the Federation of Scottish Theatre allows us to enter national dialogues regarding performing arts issues.

Building upon the success achieved through combining arts and heritage in cross service delivery of projects, we will seek funding opportunities to bring our three disciplines of performing arts, visual arts and heritage together to demonstrate excellence in engagement and delivery.

Through our role as advocates for the creative industries, we will develop and deliver a professional visual arts exhibition programme, within the current gallery space at Eastwood Park Theatre.

The creative industries are developers and users of innovation, tech and emergent forms of creative practice.

(Scottish Government, 2020)



ACTION:
Develop site specific theatre programme



CURRENT POSITION:

The majority of our professional theatre programme is performed within Eastwood Park Theatre with several shows a year performed in community halls, schools or outdoor venues across the authority. Performances in non-traditional spaces have proved to be popular with audiences to date.

OUTCOMES:

- Develop programming opportunities in non-theatre venues
- Equip staff to support professional theatre and community drama events at other venues
- Smaller-scale work presented in an appropriate environment
- Ability to run multiple theatre events concurrently; greater capacity for income generation
- Demands on theatre operations reduced due to use of other sites
- Ability to showcase areas, buildings and open spaces across East Renfrewshire to new audiences and visitors.

MEASURES:

- Increased attendances across ERCL venues and spaces within communities
- Increased income through maximised use of available spaces
- Increased working with internal and external partners through programme delivery.

There is evidence that people may be more likely to attend cultural events in the spring and summer months and express a preference for outdoor events

(Creative Scotland, 2022)

ACTION:
Visual Arts/Performing Arts/Heritage joint projects supported by external funding



CURRENT POSITION:

ERCL received three successful funding applications (value £265k) from Creative Scotland through Covid Emergency and Recovery funds in 2020 -2022, which enabled us to successfully deliver several joint projects within the Arts and Heritage Team.

OUTCOMES:

- Successful funding awards to deliver Visual Arts/Performing Arts/Heritage joint projects
- Build on levels of community engagement and project activity from 2020-2022
- Raise the profile of the service within the local community
- Continue to develop our relationship with key funders within the sector through further initiatives
- Ability to provide free-to-access project events for audiences to engage/participate in.

MEASURES:

- Increased attendances across Arts and Heritage events – target of 15% increase
- External funding levels awarded through grants and applications maintains equivalent value to previous years
- Target of 20% of attendees at funded projects and events are first-time service-users.

ACTION:

Raise the profile of Eastwood Park Theatre as a receiving house



CURRENT POSITION:

Our relationship building with highly respected production companies and agencies to raise the profile of the theatre has resulted in access to high calibre performers and events, increasing our reputation within the Scottish theatre sector. This has allowed us to invest in our technical infrastructure, supporting significant improvements in sound and lighting options.

OUTCOMES:

- Building upon our growing reputation will allow us to attract higher profile events
- Recognition within the wider cultural sector
- Improved staff development opportunities
- Positive impact on tourism/economic development/increase in local spend
- Support the transition to the new Eastwood Park Theatre and leisure centre development
- Wider recognition of East Renfrewshire as being a destination for theatre and entertainment.

MEASURES:

- Increased sales and number of attendances on previous years, resulting in an improved financial position
- Increased diversity of audience
- Increased use of strategic pricing model for theatre events
- Customer feedback reports increased satisfaction with programme content and theatre facilities.

ACTION:

Development of visual art exhibitions program within the Gallery space at Eastwood Park



CURRENT POSITION:

Creation and hiring in of exhibitions are currently only achievable via successful external funding applications.

OUTCOMES:

- Budget allocation/funding to secure exhibitions programme for East Renfrewshire
- Refurbishment of gallery space
- Preparation/development of service for new Eastwood Leisure Centre
- Change perception of Visual Arts within East Renfrewshire by hosting higher profile events leading to wide recognition of East Renfrewshire in promoting artistic excellence.

MEASURES:

- Increased exhibition attendances (target 5000 per year)
- Increased engagement with visual arts
- Gather data on tourism/economic development (new measure – no existing baseline currently available).



ACTION:

Develop and Build upon the success of Tech School 2022-2023



CURRENT POSITION:

The NPA Technical Theatre course has been created and tested with six successful applicants during its first year of delivery. There is industry interest from other theatres and organisations in participating in this training, particularly as it is delivered in a live theatre setting. The industry continues to struggle to recruit and retain appropriately skilled and experienced sound and lighting staff as a consequence of the pandemic.

OUTCOMES:

- Established links with industry partners to determine demand /frequency of course delivery
- Provide routes into working in the industry in partnership with ERC Education, WorkER and HSCP
- Through creation of a rolling program of delivering the NPA modules extended into our class provision model
- Provide a pathway for young people participating in annual Play in a Week Tech School.

MEASURES:

- Number of applicants successfully completing the qualification averages eight per year
- Applicants continue participation in Eastwood Park Theatre's Technical Services either as crew members or casual theatre technicians
- Minimum two members of staff qualify as Internal Verifiers for the course; further staff undertake Assessors qualification to support course delivery
- Funded and/or cost recovery model of delivery of qualification.

John first engaged with the Arts and Heritage service in 2021, when he participated in our Reflect With Us songwriting project. Working with other residents of East Renfrewshire they formed a community group supported by professional musicians to write and record an album of songs. Following the project, John was inspired to continue his new found interest in music production, and was a participant of our first ever NPA (National Progression Award) in Technical Theatre course delivered from Eastwood Park Theatre during 2022/3. John said "It's been the best thing I've ever done. It gives you hope. It's been a massive achievement and I've got the bug for technical theatre. It's been great to have something positive in your life. I've enjoyed it tremendously. It's given me confidence. I never knew I could be so passionate and love learning." John continues to be involved with the Arts and Heritage service and to pursue his passion for the arts.



Our Strategic Themes

Strategic Theme 3: Sustainability

As providers of Arts and Heritage, we recognise the importance and benefits of our service are not always acknowledged by those who do not engage with, or participate in, arts and heritage experiences.

We will improve access to our services and promote the positive impact they have in relation to not only creativity, imagination and entertainment, but also how they can influence life skills, transferable workplace skills, career opportunities and health and wellbeing of individuals. We recognise that cultural engagement can indeed change lives and view our service as being central to helping local residents achieve this status of wellbeing.

We will plan our programme to include a mixture of income-generating and funded activities across arts and heritage. Our programming will ensure that our service remains financially sustainable with a blend of profit making or a cost-recovery approach in our programmes, in keeping with the charitable ethos of East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure. To ensure ongoing financial viability, we will continue to programme an annual professional pantomime for a minimum five week run, building upon the creative and commercial success that our co-productions have achieved in recent years.

Culture improves places for individuals and communities. It plays a key role in maintaining good mental health and wellbeing and it has been shown to reduce levels of social isolation, strengthen social networks and increase self-confidence and resilience. It can support good health and wellbeing for all ages.

(Scottish Government, 2020)

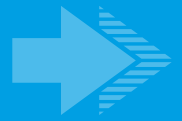
Legacy elements will be built into our programmes to ensure our service users continue to benefit from projects post-delivery, and to act as a resource for our future developmental planning. We will protect and invest in the conservation of physical items within the Heritage Collection and increase our online collections resource to ensure there is a digital record of all items.

Our Green Initiatives will inform our planning and programming and ensure that we offer an environmentally sustainable practice. We will support the Scottish Government's campaign to reach net zero emissions by 2045 and incorporate environmental considerations into the development, planning and operations of our programmes.





ACTION: Develop a Youth Theatre



CURRENT POSITION:

ERCL has been running performing art classes and summer schools (Play in a Week) for children since 2015. Over the past three years, children from those classes were successful in auditioning and performing in our professional pantomime at Eastwood Park Theatre. An ERCL youth theatre is a natural progression from our existing highly regarded regular class and summer school activity.

OUTCOMES:

- Create a youth theatre to serve in co-productions at Eastwood Park Theatre
- Create performance opportunities for youth theatre members
- Establish our role in supporting early engagement with the arts
- Signpost into career pathways in the creative industries.

MEASURES:

- Increase income generation through participation fees
- Increase Youth Theatre membership year-on-year
- Youth Theatre are participants at a minimum of three different productions or events per year.

Charlotte has been a member of our Eastwood Park Juniors Drama team for the last two years, performing in our professional annual pantos, Beauty and the Beast and The Wizard of Oz. She had no previous acting experience, but had grown in confidence through regular attendance at our "Play in a Week" drama holiday programme. Her father said 'Charlotte rated her experience with Eastwood Park as 10/10, which is all we can hope for. All the kids did so well with their lines and rehearsals, and we can't thank the team enough for giving her this opportunity to learn with a professional cast and perform on stage to sold out audiences'

ACTION:**Create a larger network of local and family history tutors****CURRENT POSITION:**

ERCL began running tutor led family and local history classes in 2018. The demand for this activity continues to grow with heritage walks being amongst our most popular offering.

OUTCOMES:

- A larger bank of freelance family and local history tutors is established
 - Further topics within the local history of East Renfrewshire is able to be explored.
-

MEASURES:

- More tutors delivering
 - More classes offered over a wider range of topics
 - Increased income generation
 - Increased attendances and participation with heritage service.
-

ACTION:**Expand our role as members of the Green Arts Initiative****CURRENT POSITION:**

ERCL have been members of the Green Arts Initiative since 2016, and promote its values in our service output and operations.

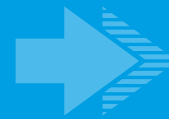
OUTCOMES:

- Staff continue to attend Springboard events to learn, engage and share ideas with other organisations
 - Staff have better knowledge, understanding and awareness of environmental issues and embed this in planning and new product development
 - The service becomes recognised for demonstrating waste reduction and minimising environmental impact
 - Link with colleagues to explore opportunities to be greener, and engage customers to be greener whilst using our services.
-

MEASURES:

- Increased sales and number of attendances on previous years, resulting in an improved financial position
 - Increased diversity of audience
 - Increased use of strategic pricing model for theatre events
 - Customer feedback reports increased satisfaction with programme content and theatre facilities.
-

ACTION:
Profitable, high quality professional pantomime



CURRENT POSITION:

ERCL has grown its professional pantomime year on year since 2015. Our pantomime is the lynch pin of the financial viability of the theatre. Our co-produced shows have improved in ticket sales and production values with *The Wizard of Oz* in 2022 being our most successful to date achieving over 96% capacity/ticket sales.

OUTCOMES:

- Our pantomime is financially sustainable and able to grow, becoming an annual outing for local families and visitors returning to Eastwood Park Theatre every Christmas.
- Annual panto audience attendance extends to other performances throughout the year; we are a trusted supplier of quality performing arts
- Development of youth theatre providing participants the opportunity to experience performing in professional panto and an awareness of potential careers within the industry
- Profit generated from pantomime supplements year round theatre programme.

MEASURES:

- Increased exhibition attendances (target 5000 per year)
- Increased engagement with visual arts
- Gather data on tourism/economic development (new measure – no existing baseline currently available).

During the 2019-20 season... 119 [UK] pantomimes... sold slightly over three million tickets, with a value of £65.4m

(TRG Arts and Purple Seven, 2021)



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