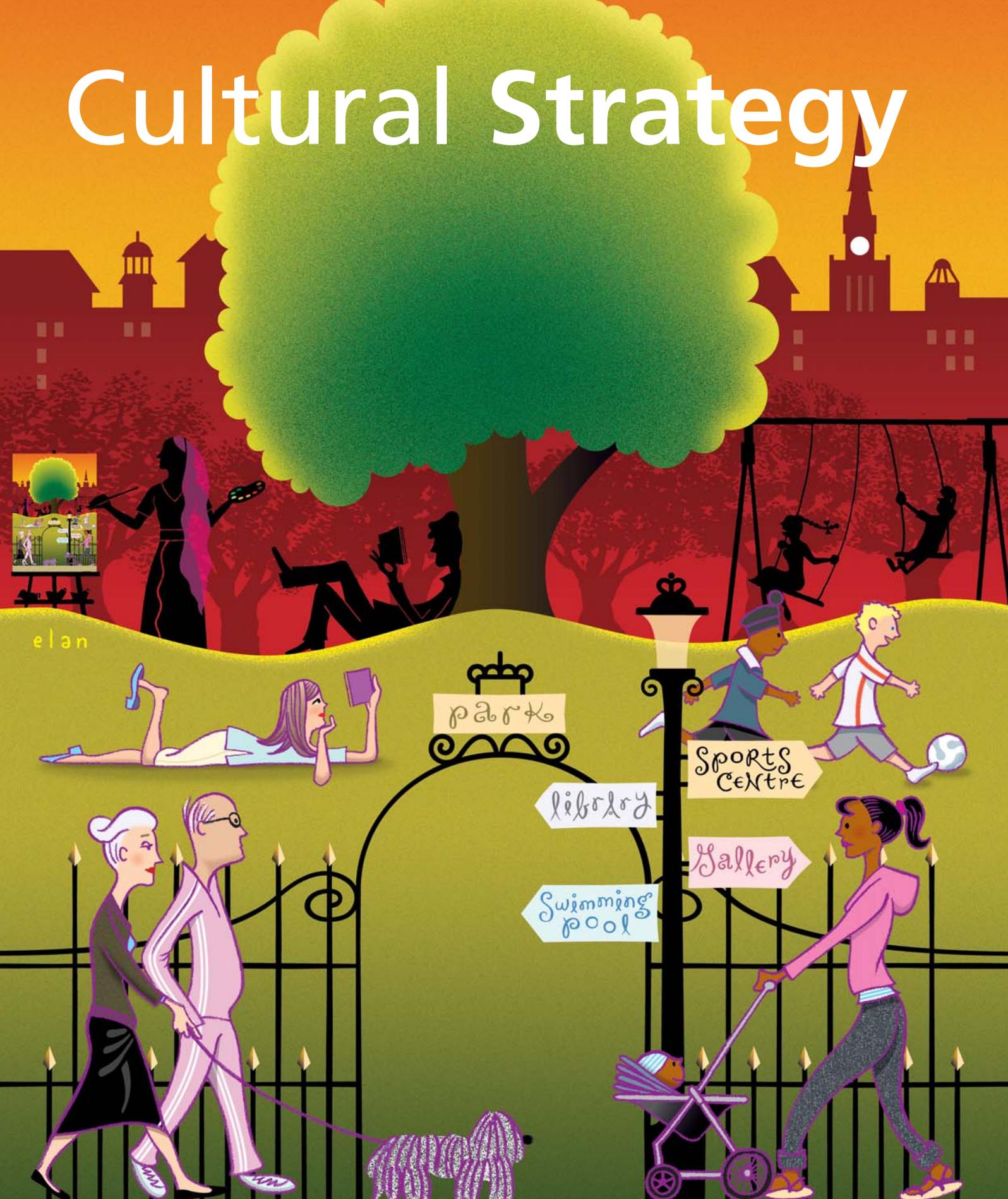


Cultural Strategy



Introduction

Welcome to Ealing's new Cultural Services strategy.



Culture is central to our way of life, and our quality of life. It embraces a wide variety of activities, places and values that contribute to a sense of identity and wellbeing for everyone in our community.

Culture is inclusive. It develops social capital by strengthening local networks, and personal capital by developing people's skills, health and confidence. Cultural Services engage the whole community, bringing people together and breaking down barriers between them.

Culture also attracts visitors, presenting opportunities to promote our community to the wider world.

Culture is where local diversity is strongest, so we can be very diverse in our aspirations. Central to Ealing's role in cultural provision is promoting access to a wide range of opportunities for all sections of the community, especially those for whom costs are a barrier. This new strategy will help us deliver value for money by forging stronger links with arts, sports and leisure organisations and developing a more ambitious framework which helps attract funding.

Ealing's Cultural Services provide facilities and opportunities including arts, community centres, sport and active leisure, libraries, adult learning, parks, and events. They are run by people with imagination and creativity. These are services that people choose to use, and which make Ealing a place where people choose to live.

This strategy has been developed in line with Partnership for Ealing's Community Strategy, *Success Through Diversity*. It sets out how Cultural Services can contribute to the long-term vision of Ealing Council, and address the priorities we share with our partners. Partnership is a crucial element in the way councils now work. Cultural Services offer significant potential for 'joined up' working with other public and voluntary agencies to achieve common objectives of improved health, inclusion and equality, raised standards of education and lifelong learning, safer communities and a better environment.

I hope you find it interesting and useful.

Councillor Nigel Sumner
Cabinet Member for Health and Community Well-Being

What is a cultural strategy and what will it do for Ealing?

Our cultural strategy is a five-year plan (2007-2012) for cultural activity and development in the Ealing local area; a shared vision for our local authority and our cultural partners.

The word “culture” is used in its broadest sense. It covers the multitude of things that we do in our leisure time – playing or watching sports, strolling in our parks and open spaces, visiting our museums or art galleries, using our libraries and enhancing our intellectual experiences through reading and learning. It is about people and what makes a place different or special. Cultural activities motivate and enrich the lives of people of all ages who live in and visit the borough. These activities are not only provided by the council, but also by its partners and the private sector.

The cultural strategy takes Ealing’s Community Strategy *Success Through Diversity* as the basis of its framework. Ealing’s over-arching strategy has six themes to deliver its vision that:

By 2016 Ealing will be a successful borough at the heart of west London, where everyone has the opportunities to prosper and live fulfilling lives in communities that are safe, cohesive and engaged.

The cultural strategy follows five of the six themes in Ealing Council’s corporate plan:

Instead of the organisational improvement theme, the strategy will show how we work with our partners to provide a joined up service to the community:

Success Through Partnerships. There are two further themes: New and Improved Facilities, and London 2012 – the Olympics and Paralympic Games.

This cultural strategy will act as the overarching framework for individual service strategies (arts and community centres; sports and physical activity; libraries, information and adult learning; parks, countryside and events), bringing them together in a cohesive way.



Setting the scene: the Ealing context

Ealing is one of 6 boroughs that comprise the distinct West London sub-region. Within its boundaries there are a number of local communities, each with their own definitive identities, and a series of complex sub-communities based on ethnicity, beliefs, nationality or other affinities.

People

Ealing's population grew from 283,800 in 1991 to 301,000 in 2001- an increase of 6%. This growth rate puts strains on communities and increases demand for services, which will intensify as growth continues.

Understanding demographic trends is central to anticipating what changes will be needed, and developing our strategy so services are targeted to meet demands.

Ealing is the 3rd most diverse borough in London. There are up to 90 individual languages or dialects spoken by pupils attending school in the borough. Over 40% cent of the population is from black and minority ethnic communities (compared to a London average of 28% and a national average of 8%). At ward level, ethnic diversity varies from over 80% black and minority ethnic residents in Southall to less than 20% in Southfield. Ealing is also home to over 1,000 asylum seekers. Population change is high, with a turnover rate of between 25% and 30% per annum as new waves of migrants arrive and settle. The high numbers of Poles and Somalis arriving in recent years attest to this, reflecting Ealing's proximity to Heathrow international airport. It is concentrated and subject to a high degree of change. Services need to reflect the diversity of the existing population as well as those new to the borough.

Our strategy is focused and flexible.

Economy and Enterprise

The borough has prospered in recent years. 72 per cent of residents are in work; above average for London and just below the national rate. Average household income in 2006 tops £37,000 per year. With Central & Piccadilly Line tube links and mainline rail links to Paddington, the borough acts as a key commuter transport hub into central London, while the Park Royal business park acts as a key distribution hub for West London. Glaxo-Smith Kline, the BBC and Thames Valley University are all major employers in the borough. Ealing has a thriving niche film and broadcasting industry. Ealing Studios produces a steady output of feature films and Ealing features in many UK television programmes as a location for filming.

Our strategy acknowledges that prosperity is fragile and masks ongoing inadequacies.

Education and Skills

Educational attainment in the borough is a success story with 60% of pupils achieving 5 GCSE A-C passes at a rate that is improving. 25% of adults have a degree - average for London, but higher than the national rate of 15%. However the council's education authorities face a challenge in making improvements for the 40% of pupils who are currently not achieving the level of educational attainment that will provide strong foundations for further education and success in the world of work. Key areas for improvement include attainment levels for black male pupils and reducing the number of excluded pupils.

Our Strategy takes a lifelong approach to education and learning, so services address inequality.

Health

The people of Ealing have average life expectancy, with men living to 76 years of age and women to 81. However in some wards men live 8 years less and women 5 years less than in other wards. Health inequality is a major issue. At the last census 28% of people felt themselves to be less than healthy. Rates of circulatory disease and other health indicators like obesity and Type 2 diabetes are above average.

Our strategy tackles health inequality, seeking to minimize poor life chances by limiting or eradicating the risk of poor life experiences.

Environment and Transport

The borough's position as a major transport corridor into Central London is reflected in high levels of air and noise pollution. High population density and connectivity between neighbourhoods and the rest of London puts pressure on the transport system, reflected by above average reliance on private cars as a mode of transport. This is balanced by access to parks and open spaces. However high levels of car usage and the continuing tension between sustainable town centres and large-scale out of town development continue to put pressure on the environment.

Our strategy gives full consideration to protecting and improving our local environment through service planning and delivery, and influencing public behaviour on key environmental issues.

Housing

The ratio of house prices to income in Ealing is amongst the highest in the UK at 5.34. 20% of houses are classed as overcrowded and 5% cannot afford proper maintenance. Average housing stock is deteriorating due to high house prices being affordable only at the expense of outlay on maintenance.

Our strategy acknowledges this when making decisions about managing existing property and developing new projects.

Community

Ealing is comprised of a series of distinct communities. Ealing, Acton, Perivale, Southall, Hanwell, Greenford and Northolt are distinct geographic areas. Each has its own characteristics, problems and needs. Sitting within and across these locations are complex sub-communities based on ethnicity, belief, nationality or other affinities.

Community engagement is improving. However almost 10% of the population does not register to vote. Of those who did, only 32% actually voted in the last council elections. Particular communities, including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, are often particularly disengaged. There will be an increasing focus in the coming years on community consultation and targeted service initiatives, which will foster community cohesion and build social capital. Cultural services are uniquely placed to drive this engagement and foster community cohesion, enabling all communities within the borough to build social capital.

Our strategy recognizes these complexities.

Quality of Life (Called “Environment, Housing and Culture” in the Corporate Plan)

Access to good sports and leisure facilities, community centres, parks and libraries are one of the key reasons why people choose where to live. Cultural services provided by the council and its partners touch the lives of all residents and many visitors, for instance through using the registrars service, parks, pools or libraries.

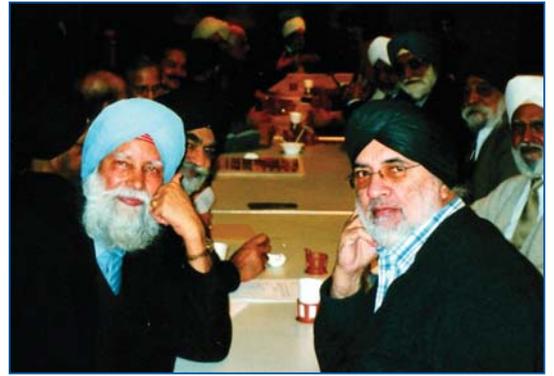
Culture can be a powerful tool to engage all sections of the community and break down barriers between them. People choose to take part in cultural activities – they can bring people from different communities together to share positive experiences and gain greater understanding of each other’s way of life. This can help to counter tensions that can threaten public order and safety.

In order to build cohesive communities in Ealing we will tackle social divisions that exist by making facilities available to all – where necessary by targeting specific provision at hard-to-reach and/or under-represented groups. We will encourage cross-cultural activities and promote better understanding between different faiths and social backgrounds, for example by hosting the London Mela for the GLA.



We will:

- Continue our commitment to high quality programming encompassing all the arts
- Highlight the identity, history and sense of place of local areas to residents and visitors to the borough
- Create and maintain safe and well used parks and open spaces for the use of all residents and visitors
- Develop a distinctive programme of events and festivals to encourage community participation, increase tourism and promote Ealing as the cultural heart of West London
- Support sports and physical activity by managing, improving and promoting facilities
- Provide fit for purpose and attractive libraries
- Fund regimes to incentivise people and organisations to co-operate, and develop programmes which promote cross-cultural understanding
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities in both leisure pursuits and basic skills for life in the heart of our diverse communities



"We grew up in Kenya, Tanzania & Mombasa, and worked or studied together. Now all of us are in our golden years. For over 17 years our meetings have given us the chance to share sad and happy memories and reminisce about the past. For some of the older members it is their only social outing of the week"

**East African Asian Citizens Association,
Dominion Centre, Southall**

Safer Communities

Much of the crime that contributes to negative perceptions about neighbourhoods, such as graffiti and mobile phone theft, is associated with young people. For many of them, especially in areas of deprivation, there is a risk of exclusion, crime, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour. Involvement in cultural activities can offer the opportunity to develop skills and engage with their local community. Evidence shows that engaging young people in this way reduces their risk of offending. The council's Home Office funded Positive Futures programme, delivered in partnership with Brentford FC's Community Sports Trust, is one of the best examples of how young people can be engaged in sport and diverted from crime. Young people on the scheme have also been trained as sports coaches, improving their employment prospects.



Increasing participation in cultural activities gets people using parks and sports and community centres more. This has the effect of making neighbourhoods feel more vibrant, and making people feel safer.

We will:

- Use cultural services and facilities to engage young people and divert them from crime and antisocial behaviour at a neighbourhood level
- Seek community input to devise creative solutions to local problems at a neighbourhood level
- Use results of research into safer neighbourhoods policing
- Expand Positive Futures into areas beyond sport. Examples could include involving participants in:
 - arts and music projects
 - allotment horticulture schemes
 - targeted reading groups and events in libraries
- Create new opportunities for sport in areas with high rates of crime and deprivation, for example the Swift Road development on the Havelock Estate in Southall

Health and Independence

One of the key changes in the current NHS improvement plan is the focus on wellbeing and health, in addition to illness. Clear messages on the importance of preventative health emerge from the government paper Choosing Health. These indicate that taking part in cultural and physical activities can have a beneficial impact on residents' physical and mental wellbeing.

These benefits become important when rates of diseases worsened by inactivity, such as CHD, diabetes, TB, osteoporosis and obesity are above national averages in Ealing, and especially in Southall.

Evidence shows that being physically active, and involved in social networks not only maintains and improves health, but also helps older people remain independent longer. Cultural Services can make a great contribution to improving older people's quality of life through imaginative service provision.



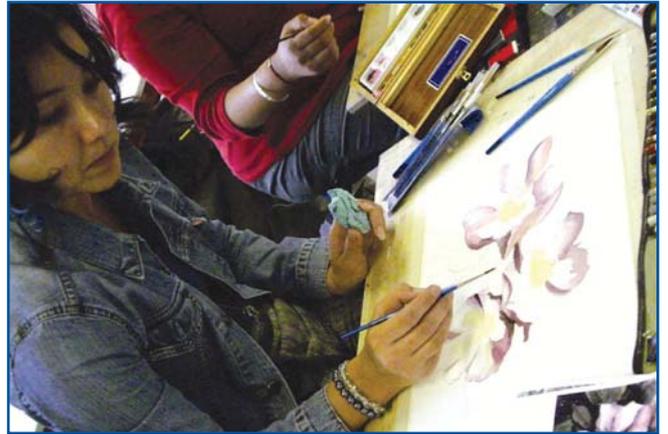
We will:

- Coordinate community facilities at Jubilee Gardens library to provide joined-up services between culture and health
- Work on developing GP referral schemes to sport and library services
- Increase targeted sports development work with older people to increase physical activity levels and enable more people to remain independent longer
- Continue to champion sports that Ealing excels in, like swimming, cricket, rugby, tennis and athletics

Economy

Creative industries are a historically significant and dynamic part of Ealing's economy. As well as the film studios for which Ealing is famous, Questors Theatre is a key cultural focal point and a local comedy club is an important partner in Ealing's Summer Festival.

Many smaller creative industries are deterred from locating to the borough due to rising property prices, and these same costs make it difficult for new businesses to become established in the borough.



"I learnt lots of new skills whilst having fun at the same time"

High-end creative industries, like media consultancies and market research companies, can be attracted to the borough by encouraging developers to offer a mix of premises and accommodation that meets their needs.

The success of creative industries depends on the supply of young people with creative talents and skills. Ealing has further and higher education institutions that provide training in the visual and performing arts. The Questors theatre also provides training.

Cultural activities can increase the confidence and employment prospects of young people through teaching transferable skills such as coaching and mentoring.

We will:

- Help creative industries flourish in Ealing through encouraging appropriate development and regeneration
- Build links with local companies and create opportunities for vocational training
- Provide courses for adults to help them reduce their dependency on benefits and return to the workplace by teaching skills in, for example, English as a second language, British citizenship, CV writing and vocational training
- Support local ambition and encourage access to employment through volunteering, coaching, training, work experience and other opportunities
- Make places on the proposed council apprenticeship scheme available to young people across cultural services
- Support volunteers to improve their skills and prospects
- Create opportunities for students through the Education Business Partnership
- Provide opportunities to exhibit and sell works of art

Children and young people

For many young people cultural activity offers a route to reaffirming their identities, building confidence and engaging with their local communities. This may be through sporting activity or taking part in various art forms. Such activities can offer opportunities for self-expression, personal fulfillment, a sense of achievement and the chance to work and/or play with others.

Children and young people are often the victims of crime, but recent studies suggest they also help make areas safer through social networks, school affiliations and shared leisure activities.



Targeted work to engage them in cultural activities and sport can therefore have a beneficial effect. It can improve their life chances by limiting exposure to crime, and diverting them into activities that allow them to develop as responsible members of the community. Skills and qualifications gained through sport help make young people more employable, both within the sport and leisure sector and in the wider job market/private sector.

The strategy will enable the council to develop a response to the emerging epidemics of child obesity and diabetes by encouraging young people to be more physically active.

Involvement in sport and cultural activities improves educational attainment and develops skills like problem solving that can be applied later in the workplace. Creative Partnerships has demonstrated how fostering creativity in children can raise national standards in science and industry.

We will:

- Contribute to children's educational and personal attainment, and help develop their confidence and self esteem
- Encourage clubs to train young people as coaches and become active volunteers
- Provide homework clubs, children's activities and reading clubs in libraries, and make library buildings more child-friendly
- Continue to support the West London Creative Partnerships scheme
- Provide educational programmes through Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery
- Continue to provide family learning within schools, encouraging parents to take an active role in their children's education
- Tackle child obesity by ensuring children and young people have opportunities to participate in physical education and sport

Success through partnerships

This strategy brings together all that is happening, and will happen, in cultural activities in Ealing. It enables existing council partners to develop their strategies in line with the council's five strategic themes and goals. This will encourage joined up working across services and assist the annual business and service planning cycle, in addition to meeting longer-term central government agendas. It will also help us work together with public, private and voluntary providers.

Having a clear strategic framework and direction will help all providers achieve value for money through more effective resource management, as spending will be more effectively targeted.

For Ealing Council, this strategy will shape the way its cultural services can help deliver the outcomes in the council's new Local Area Agreement, and help other services meet targets, some of which have significant financial reward elements. Particularly relevant are the blocks relating to Healthier Communities and Older People, and Children and Young People.



"I play cricket with my friends in the park after school, at weekends and in the holidays. I also play for my school team. I've made new friends through the Positive Futures league. I've met my favourite sportsman Monty Panesar, and I've won medals, which made me feel great. It keeps me busy so I don't get bored - it's definitely better for you than sitting at home watching TV!"



"Sport has made me fitter. I have more energy now. Now when I'm bored I go out and play football. It has helped my temper too!"

Much cultural provision is delivered by local partners, independently of the council. It is important that these activities and services are coordinated in a strategic way to avoid duplication and enable providers to share resources and support each other.

The Arts, Sport and Culture Board, a sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership, is responsible for taking actions forward and evaluating progress. It includes representation from bodies covering all aspects of cultural activity from the public, private and voluntary sectors, and will report progress through the Local Strategic Partnership.

We will:

- Develop mechanisms to provide effective cooperation, coordination and joint working across the public, private and voluntary sectors, and between different aspects of cultural services and activities
- Develop and influence a regional vision and delivery plan for culture in west London
- Build on existing partnerships between statutory bodies to consult with and engage our local communities, and deliver joined-up solutions and facilities in which to provide cultural services that meet their needs

Community Cohesion

The work of the council is not only concerned with providing tangible services like emptying bins, but is also about supporting people's social and psychological needs - both as individuals and within larger social groups. Social capital is the term that describes the institutional and social networks that enable communities to function collectively. The challenge of collective cohesion is to break down segregated communities and entrenched attitudes, removing insularity that can polarize beliefs and perceptions. The focus of multiculturalism is now shifting away from differences towards commonalities to combat segregation.



"Everybody here is proud of Southall Park. It has been improving constantly over the last few years, and is now a safe place the whole community enjoy. Children play, and the older generation exercise and meet friends. It is a source of great pride to local residents"

Cultural services can help develop mixed communities by breaking down separation and fear, addressing people's sense of community and improving their life chances. Arts, sport and culture offer a way into communities, especially through the partnership approach. Encouraging shared values in this way can tackle overemphasis on separate values. Cultural services and facilities can counter-balance spatial segregation and help people converge through community involvement.

Our strategy will place community cohesion at the centre of service delivery, not treat it as the preserve of specific initiatives. We will use citizenship, democratic engagement, belonging and identity, to help inform the way all services are planned.

New and improved facilities

The council's Cultural Services Directorate has an exciting and dynamic programme for replacement or improving some of its many buildings that are no longer fit for purpose. The council has ear-marked over £19m for new and improved facilities over the next 3 years using both mainstream and partnership funds. Developments will include:



- Implementing a swimming pool strategy aimed at enhancing the distribution and standard of facilities across the borough. This will enable more of our residents to benefit from swimming and active recreation during their leisure time; meet increasing expectations; tackle health inequalities for adults and older people, and create a great place in which children and young people can grow up.
- Implementing a property development strategy that will enable the delivery of modern and fit for purpose libraries for the twenty-first century with capital funding of £6.6m, co-located with other facilities wherever possible.
- Implementing a new parks and open spaces strategy in 2008. This will enable Ealing to prioritise the parks that need investment and develop sustainable improvements in our open spaces, for example by developing a network of park watchers, and the implementation of sustainable planting schemes.
- Determining the future governance arrangements for Gunnersbury Park
- Developing a conservation plan for Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery which will determine its future

We will:

- Bring together the latest state-of-the-art health and leisure services, under one roof wherever possible
- Ensure that council facilities are both fit for purpose and sustainable
- Produce a strategy for more efficient provision and management of golf and outdoor sports
- Ensure that energy efficiency and sustainability considerations are paramount in all new buildings

London 2012 - Olympics and Para Olympic Games

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will be a great sporting and cultural event. Ealing Council aims to obtain the greatest possible benefit for the people of Ealing from the Games, since council taxpayers of Ealing and other London boroughs will be significant funders.

Ealing will play a key role, through the West London Alliance, in maximizing the benefits of the Games for those living and working in the borough. Ealing's membership of the Association of London Government's 2012 Olympics and Paralympics Committee will ensure that our best interests are represented and maximum value from the Games will be obtained.

Locally, Ealing has many sports clubs run by volunteers who help to develop our young sporting talent, some of whom have already been identified as potential London 2012 competitors. The council's award-winning athletics track in Perivale Park is already taking part in the British Olympic Association's Passport Scheme, assisting elite athletes to prepare for the Games.



"I have been training hard over the last eight or nine years. I have taken part in international competitions, coming fifth in the Gateshead Games. I am Great Britain's 200 metre, long jump, triple jump and high jump champion in my age group. In 2001 I was the only Asian who got the MBE for Services to Athletics! This year I have already won two medals at the indoor national championships. I am very thankful for Perivale Athletics Track"

We will:

- Host international cultural groups and activities during the games
- Make our sporting facilities available to visiting countries by applying to Sport England to list Ealing venues as training camps
- Build new swimming pools in Acton and Northolt
- Take part in the five day Olympic carnival by running events in Ealing
- Promote the games through a range of innovative activities in our libraries

Cultural Services provided by Ealing Council

Active Ealing

- Operate public sports centres and facilities, targeting those who can't afford private clubs and gyms
- Develop new sport and leisure facilities with other partners
- Promote and enable healthy, active lifestyles
- Work with partners to develop sport and activity programmes specifically targeted at hard-to-reach groups
- Divert young people away from anti social behaviour and crime through targeted partnership work
- Support sport and physical activity in schools, directly and through partnerships with specialist borough sports hubs

Arts, Community Centres and Registrars

- Custodians of the Grade 1 listed Pitzhanger Manor for the use and benefit of Ealing residents
- Provide an Arts Service, including a regular programme of exhibitions and events, at Pitzhanger Manor Gallery
- Provide an educational programme to schools through the arts team, including the national Creative Partnerships project
- Encourage community cohesion through the provision of community centres
- Provide a Registrars Service for the borough, including the registration of births and deaths, civil ceremonies and citizenship applications and ceremonies

Libraries, Information & Adult Learning

- Manage libraries and provide home and mobile library services
- Lend books, music, visual and other materials
- Provide an adult learning service designed to improve work and life skills at an affordable price
- Provide study facilities
- Offer a reference and information service for knowledge on any subject
- Offer free access to the internet at libraries

Parks, Countryside and Events

- Maintain parks and open spaces, allotments and an animal centre
- Develop new parks projects
- Provide Rangers to patrol parks and promote nature conservation
- Care for trees in parks and on streets
- Manage cemeteries and provide a bereavement service
- Manage a programme of summer festivals and community events, and license funfairs and circuses

Summary

Ealing's Cultural Strategy sets out a vision for cultural development in the borough over the next five years. It places culture at the heart of Ealing as a place in the heart of west London, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper and live fulfilling lives in communities which are safe, cohesive and engaged

Ealing, along with the rest of London, is changing rapidly. It is growing fast and becoming more prosperous. However, alongside these trends sits social injustice and inequality. Many of Ealing's citizens are socially excluded. Culture has a unique and powerful potential to address some of these difficult social issues.

It is individuals and communities who make culture happen. We need to ensure that structures are in place that will enable participation, form the "grass roots", and support the development of creative and confident communities.

Ealing is a borough with many cultural strengths. We need to build on these strengths to raise the profile of Ealing as a creative centre, increase opportunities for residents and visitors, and stimulate the local economy.

The Action Plan will set out how this vision will be achieved over the next five years.

Action Plan

To be written and approved by the Arts, Sport and Culture sub-group of the LSP, taking stakeholders' views into account, and reflecting current and planned provision.

It will set out the key tasks, resources, milestones and outcomes for each objective. It will identify the lead for each action, and key partners who have agreed to play a part in delivering the strategy. The action plan will be updated annually.