

Staffordshire: Our Collective Culture



The Festival of Brilliant, Biddulph Old Hall
Photo | Jenny Harper Photography



Foreword

County Councillor Victoria Wilson

Staffordshire has a rich tapestry of industries, towns and villages, creativity, heritage and history. These are unique threads that knit our county together and I am immensely proud of our cultural offer. We want the Cultural Strategy to celebrate the cultural assets and services provided by individuals and organisations throughout Staffordshire.

We want Staffordshire to be known and seen as an example of the power of collective action to develop a vibrant, accessible, inclusive and sustainable arts, culture, sports and heritage offer.

Staffordshire: Our Collective Culture is an exciting and aspirational approach to align and unite cultural activities, services, individuals and organisations across the county.

We see arts, culture and sports as an integral part of a good 'quality of life' offer for any place, bringing vibrancy and diversity to our communities.

Culture contributes to improved health and wellbeing and the revitalisation of communities.

The Local Government Association states:

'Culture is who we are. It is our heritage and future. It is how we live our lives and express our identities. It is art, music, film, fashion, design, even gaming.'

Working together with The Audience Agency, we have engaged local people, businesses and partners in developing this Cultural Strategy.



Staffordshire: Our Collective Culture provides an opportunity to work collaboratively on promoting and providing access to culture across our county so that Staffordshire is a great place to live and work.

This strategy is the beginning of our collaborative journey to embed culture in our communities and we will continue to work with you to deliver a vibrant cultural offer.

Cover image | Camp Bestival, Weston Park

Party in the Park, Victoria Park, Stafford



The Big Idea and Vision

"A successful Cultural Strategy for Staffordshire will offer clear pathways for all ages to thrive. It should offer excellent education, fun activities for young people, career and business opportunities and affordable living for middle-aged residents. As people age, we will need to provide accessibility, cultural vibrancy, and a strong sense of community. Staffordshire should be a place where people can grow, build their lives and feel at home, making it a great place to be."

Pat Flaherty, Chief Executive Officer,
Staffordshire County Council

Staffordshire: Our Collective Culture

'Our Collective Culture' is an exciting, aspirational approach to align and unite the cultural activities, services, individuals and organisations across Staffordshire.

We aim to better connect the districts and boroughs, bringing together our diverse communities and vibrant cultural sector - without taking away from the unique identities of each place. Through collective action, we can enhance our countywide offer bringing people together personally and professionally and driving sustainable economic growth.

What's our vision for a future Staffordshire?

**Vibrant. Accessible.
Inclusive. Sustainable.
Collaborative.**

We want Staffordshire to be known for, and seen as, an example of the power of collective action to develop a vibrant, accessible, inclusive and sustainable, arts, culture, sports and heritage offer.

By working with our communities, championing local talent and advocating for the value of arts, culture, sports, heritage and green spaces in Staffordshire at the highest levels of influence, we will bring this vision to life.

Our commitment is to the people, places and natural environment of the county and we will work to preserve Staffordshire's rich history and green spaces for our current and future generations.

We will strengthen working relationships and align with our neighbours - for example Stoke-on-Trent, the Peak District, and Cheshire to enhance opportunities for collaboration. By working together, we aim to share best practice, support regional projects, and enhance cultural and economic ties for mutual benefit.

This aspirational approach is inspired by the many unique identities and communities across our eight districts and boroughs. Combining that spirit to create this plan of action to further develop and deliver 'Our Collective Culture'.

What is Culture?

Culture is often defined as food, religion and heritage. It is also sometimes used to describe artistic and creative activity. It means a lot of different things to a lot of people. Most importantly, it describes activity about people and places. Its impact can be felt by individuals and communities and seen within a thriving economy.

Staffordshire County Council believes that 'culture' is a collective experience. It includes many things that people can engage with right across the county.

Farmers' Market, Stone



What is a Cultural Strategy?

A Cultural Strategy is a guide or plan for a group of people or a specific place. It outlines key focus areas and shared goals for those people and places to work together to boost cultural engagement and development.

This typically includes bringing communities together, creating events and activities for artistic expression, storytelling and attracting investment.

Arts and Creative Activities

Any form of creative or artistic activity, including theatre, dance, music, visual arts, crafts, exhibitions, literature, digital arts, film, and photography.

Heritage and History

Activities that provide opportunities to share our history, local traditions, and stories. This includes green spaces, castles, cathedrals, festivals, parades, heritage celebrations, collections, heritage groups and societies, reading groups and storytelling sessions.

Community and Social Activities

Events and gatherings that bring people together, like reading groups, community fairs, social clubs, and public celebrations including food and drink festivals.

Education and Learning Activities

Workshops, talks, courses and classes that promote learning and understanding of culture and develop skills.

Health and Wellbeing

Activities that support better mental health and physical wellbeing, such as healthy eating and cooking classes, access to nature, individual and team sports, and holistic activities such as yoga.

Natural Environment

From our waterways, country parks and nature reserves, to our town parks and village greens, our natural environment is all around us and supports our wildlife and climate.

Cultural Sector Support

Initiatives that promote and support the cultural sector freelancers and businesses, including networking events, funding opportunities, and professional development workshops.

Advocacy, Engagement and Impact

From networks to news stories that advocate for the importance of culture and encourage public participation and feedback on cultural initiatives.

Where Can Culture Happen?

- › In our homes, gardens and on our doorsteps
- › In our schools and other education settings
- › In nature and across our green spaces, like parks and gardens.
- › At venues such as cinemas, theatres, shopping spaces and food halls.
- › At heritage sites and in historic buildings, including museums and galleries.
- › In online spaces, including virtual tours and digital exhibitions.
- › Sports grounds, including stadia, leisure centres and community sports centres.
- › At our libraries, community spaces and faith centres.

Culture can happen anywhere in Staffordshire. It is not confined to our built cultural assets but it is in the fabric of the county in our neighbourhoods, green spaces and towns. Culture happens within our places and is held by our people. It is an important part of who we are and what connects us.

'Our Collective Culture' Strategy Summary

How We Built It

Who It's For

What's Inside

Our Collective Culture

This strategy was created after research and engagement with Staffordshire County Council leads, residents and organisations from the arts, culture, heritage and sports sectors, local businesses and young people.

We held workshops, ran surveys and visited libraries across the county. In the conversations we asked what was important to people, what barriers and challenges existed, and how people felt about the current offer of cultural services and activities directly where they live or work, and more widely.



Stafford Castle

Staffordshire shared and we listened

This document acknowledges Staffordshire's diverse arts, cultural, heritage and sports offer and the impact it has on Staffordshire's people and places.

We summarise what is already available and happening and share some of the findings from the research and engagement period.

Through this strategy we set out the vision, themes, actions and partners for how a county-wide Cultural Strategy can support positive change for the next 5 years in Staffordshire.

Who is it for?

This strategy has been designed to ensure that creativity and culture are embedded in the decision-making and actions that impact Staffordshire's social and economic landscape, both short term and long term.

'Our Collective Culture' strategy is to provide clarity and guidance to:

Residents

Children and Young People

Students

Artists, Creatives and Arts

Organisations

Heritage Groups, Organisations and Sites

Sports Leaders, Clubs, Groups and Venues

Health Sector

Education Sector

Voluntary Sector

Tourism Sector

Social Enterprises

Charities, Trusts and Foundations

Independent and Commercial Businesses

Property Developers and Landowners

Regeneration Specialists

Local Government

National Government

Funders

Strategy Themes

Throughout the research and engagement period, the following themes have emerged and will now form the strategic pillars that will guide our actions:

1 | Community Engagement

2 | Accessibility and Inclusion

3 | Cultural Advocacy

4 | Collaboration

5 | Archives, Heritage, Libraries and Arts

6 | Investment and Funding

1

Community Engagement

We will create opportunities for Staffordshire communities to participate in and contribute towards decision making about cultural events, activities, programmes and initiatives across the county. Where this is already happening for example: Libraries, Creative People and Places.

ACTION 1 | We will ensure all communities across Staffordshire have access to culture on their doorsteps.

ACTION 2 | Communities will inform and engage with vibrant cultural programming in their neighbourhoods facilitated through a process of co-production and co-creation.

ACTION 3 | We will continue to provide opportunities for communities across the county to share their views and inform cultural decision making.

2

Accessibility and Inclusion

We will work to encourage the delivery and development of a cultural offer in Staffordshire that is diverse and considers the needs of individuals and wider community, education and business groups. Where this is already happening for example: New Vic Borderlines, New Vic Dementia and Creativity Group, Active Volunteers, Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Service, Support Staffordshire.

ACTION 1 | We will champion socially engaged and inclusive practice throughout the county, including support of flagship programmes such as the New Vic's Borderlines and Dementia and Creativity programme and Staffordshire Archives and Heritage's Pride in our Past project.

ACTION 2 | In partnership with Together Active, we will tackle systemic inequalities in physical activity and sport participation across Staffordshire.

ACTION 3 | We will encourage lifelong learning, skills and capacity development through an inclusive cultural volunteering offer for everyone [with partners Support Staffordshire and Staffordshire County Council].



Pride Parade, Stafford Town Centre
Photo | David Wakefield, Peter Rogers Photographic Ltd

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Cultural Advocacy

We will champion the value of Staffordshire's arts, culture, heritage and sports at the highest levels of influence and in our day-to-day work at the County Council. Acknowledging the important contributions that organisations and individuals in the cultural sector play in shaping better social and economic outcomes across the county and country. Where this is already happening for example: We Are Staffordshire, Local Visitor Economy Partnership, Cannock Chase National Landscape, and through our membership with the Tourism Alliance UK.

ACTION 1 | We will identify and map our cultural assets to develop our understanding and connect opportunities for social and economic development.

ACTION 2 | We will continue to develop our relationships with government bodies, funders and professional networks such as Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Sport England, National Archives, Historic England, Visit England, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), National Trust, Natural England, Canals and River Trust.

ACTION 3 | We will create a culture forum to connect cultural leaders and advocate for the value of culture with key stakeholders.



World of Wedgwood, Barlaston

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Collaboration

We will promote collaboration and partnership among community members, businesses, educational institutions, government bodies, and the arts, cultural heritage and sports sectors. Where this is already happening for example: Cultural Compact in Cannock Chase, Staffordshire History Network.

ACTION 1 | Through local networks and the new culture forum, we will look to develop the sector through knowledge sharing, skills development and capacity building.

ACTION 2 | Through effective partnerships, we will deliver a shared vision for engaging with existing and new audiences through our cultural programmes and activities.

ACTION 3 | We will identify resources to support the delivery and embedding of the Cultural Strategy across the county.

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Archives, Heritage, Libraries and Arts

We will collect and share the stories of Staffordshire's people; and protect and conserve the heritage assets and collections which represent over a thousand years of history across the county. Where this is already happening for example: Staffordshire History Centre, visitor centres, libraries and green spaces.

ACTION 1 | Staffordshire History Centre will bring to life the county's rich history in a new visitor attraction and through a community focussed heritage programme. The new home of Staffordshire Archives and Heritage will continue to locate, collect and preserve irreplaceable archive and museum collections of Staffordshire and to preserve the archives of the Diocese of Lichfield.

ACTION 2 | The Staffordshire History Network will support and enable museums, historical groups and societies, civic societies, research groups and heritage sites to protect, conserve and share the county's unique heritage assets.

ACTION 3 | Through investment in our library service and supporting our community managed libraries, we will enrich the lives of local people.

ACTION 4 | Through investment in Staffordshire's country parks at Cannock Chase and Chasewater and the 92-mile Staffordshire Way we will help people rediscover and experience the natural beauty and open spaces in the county.



Staffordshire History Centre

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Investment and Funding

We will continue to invest time, resource and funding to design activities that support culture and community at grassroots level. We will also continue to attract inward investment from the private sector and seek opportunities for financial support from regional and national funding bodies. Current examples include: Staffordshire Film Hub, LIV Golf UK with JCB, Staffordshire History Centre, re-imagining our libraries, country parks and visitor centres, and support for high street investment and development.

ACTION 1 | The newly launched Staffordshire Film Office will raise Staffordshire's profile including its rich assets and accessible infrastructure nationally and internationally.

ACTION 2 | We will work with our partners and key national funders to explore opportunities for sustained collaborative investment in the county. We will advocate that Staffordshire has a representative share of funding allocated towards cultural projects and initiatives.

ACTION 3 | Through investment in our library service and supporting our community managed libraries, we will enrich the lives of local people.'



Churnet Woods, Leek

How Culture Connects to Other Strategies

To deliver on our vision of a connected and embedded approach to culture, the Cultural Strategy has been designed to align with other County Council strategies and plans listed on the right.



The detailed action plan will examine and explain the cross-cutting themes and actions for culture and the outlined strategies.

Staffordshire Pie

Dawn Jutton, Staffordshire Poet Laureate 2022 - 2024

Gather beating hearts of ancient Mercia
marbled with moorland, forest and vale,
add age-old coppice tales of hermit caves,
of kings and deer, a princely pilgrim's path.

Fold in bluebell robes for a warrior queen,
blend river, brook and mere until oak and earth
drip rust and gold under fire-dust skies, then
twist a three-loop knot that binds you to her burgh.

Chop lush green land
into pasture, orchard, vineyard -
add a pinch of precious wildlife,

stir in just enough market towns
spired cities and village greens
to ensure you can taste their flavours,

spread the efforts of
industrialists, entrepreneurs
potters, brewers and bakers
across steam-filled skies,

bake sun-kissed ideas
from writers, musicians, artists
fired by restless fingers
to seek crimson horizons,

drizzle peak performance
from cyclists, sprinters, canoeists,
in lakes and lanes linking
north to south, east to west.

Invite strangers to your table to share your feast,
promise they will find someone they know
and that you will be serving Staffordshire Pie.

About Staffordshire

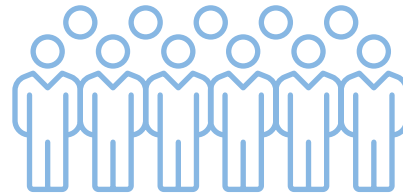
The 2021 Census shows that 876,100 people live in Staffordshire across 375,200 households.

The largest age group in Staffordshire is 50-54 years old. Compared to the rest of England, Staffordshire has more people aged 50 to 85+ and fewer people aged 0 to 49.

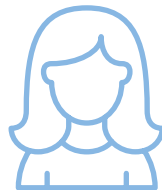
This indicates an ageing population, which has important implications for our Cultural Strategy. Our approach is one that is intergenerational, accessible and inclusive - creating an offer that supports all life stages and opportunities for life-long learning and access to culture.

A further breakdown of Staffordshire's population is detailed on the right.

**This data was sourced from Census 2021.*



Population
876,100



Female
50.5%



Male
49.5%



Households
375,200

Place

Staffordshire is already a place to be proud of. Our arts, heritage, cultural, and sports offerings see our organisations and individuals achieving critical acclaim across the UK and internationally. From the Anglo-Saxon era to modern day amusement parks, Michelin rated restaurants and pop-up food festivals. Historic sites, medieval cathedrals, national parks and landscapes, a national football centre and groundbreaking theatres - we are the creative county.

Work to celebrate Staffordshire as a great place is delivered by We Are Staffordshire.

Staffordshire on Stage and Screen:

Did you know?

In 2020, Theresa Heskins, Director of New Vic Theatre, Newcastle Under Lyme, won an Olivier Award for Best Family Show *The Worst Witch*.



Staffordshire Cultural Highlights

This list highlights key cultural assets in Staffordshire and is not an exhaustive list. The list aims to provide a representative sample of the county's cultural offer.

Natural Environment

The Environment and Countryside Service enables visitors and residents in Staffordshire to access and enjoy the natural environment across the county.

There are 5 main country parks, 9 local sites, and 3 greenways covering approximately 5,600 acres. These include significant cultural heritage features such as designed landscapes, military training areas from the two World Wars and industrial features.

In December 2022 Staffordshire County Council agreed a new vision for the Countryside Estate to provide accessible and inclusive natural green space for communities and visitors, actively supporting health and wellbeing. There will be a significant investment in Cannock Chase and Chasewater Country Parks, with improvements and new visitor facilities, providing a great opportunity to celebrate our countryside offer.

Transforming the Trent Valley Partnership and Scheme

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust is the lead partner of the Transforming the Trent Valley Partnership, a collection of charities, local authorities, statutory bodies and businesses working together to connect communities, support local action, and restore and enhance the natural environment and cultural heritage of the Trent Valley.

The River Trent rises in Biddulph Moor, north of Stoke-on-Trent and flows south through Stone and east to Rugeley before heading north to Burton and towards Derbyshire.

The Transforming the Trent Valley partnership work to understand the historic landscapes, supports the creation of strategies for environmental change and informs landowners' planning decisions.

Transforming the Trent Valley is a National Lottery Heritage Funded scheme.

www.thetrentvalley.org.uk

The Hub at St. Mary's, Lichfield

Archives, Heritage, Libraries and Arts

The following services and projects highlight where significant investment has been made or is planned in the future to improve the cultural offer across Staffordshire.



Staffordshire History Centre

Over a thousand years of Staffordshire's history will be on display in an exciting new £8.7 million visitor attraction in the county. Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and with Staffordshire County Council investment, the new history centre will open in 2024.

Staffordshire History Centre will bring together three incredible collections, from the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service, the County Museum and the William Salt Library, in an extension to the existing Staffordshire Record Office on Eastgate Street in Stafford. The building will also incorporate the William Salt Library buildings. A modern glazed link between the library and the record office will create a new entrance and permanent exhibition space to showcase the county's collections.

The centre will include extra strong rooms, which will provide space for a further 50 years of collections, a new learning space will offer educational opportunities for schools and courses for adult learners and there will be a dedicated space for volunteers.

www.staffordshirehistorycentre.blog

Reimagining Libraries

Staffordshire County Council has demonstrated their commitment to modernising Staffordshire's library offer by relocating four libraries, refurbishing Tamworth Library and committing to spend further funding - £5 million over the next five years in improving the library offer.

Staffordshire County Council has secured a total of £465,000 Libraries Improvement Funding to refurbish and redesign the library offer at Burton and Wombourne Libraries and enhance the library offer to meet the needs of the local communities.

This fund enables library services across England to invest in a range of projects to upgrade buildings and technology, so they are better placed to respond to the changing ways people are using them.

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/libraries

The Festival of Brilliant - Children's Book Festival

Staffordshire's Festival of Brilliant was launched in July 2024 in a new collaboration between arts organisation OUTSIDE, with Staffordshire County Council's Libraries and Arts Service, local children, teachers and authors, who all share a love of reading.

The celebration which took place in Biddulph in the Staffordshire Moorlands included readings, talks, workshops, performances, installations and activities.

Champions of children's books, writer Frank Cottrell Boyce and author/illustrator Nadia Shireen, who host the popular podcast about children's books 'The Island of Brilliant' which inspired the festival, both attended the event to talk about their books and shared passion for reading.

www.outsidearts.org



Tamworth Castle

Tamworth Castle takes visitors on a journey through 900 years of history. With 15 fully furnished rooms, visitors can discover how the Saxons, Normans, Tudors and Victorians spent their time in the castle.

In 2021, the castle opened a new state of the art £0.7 million Battle and Tribute exhibition. The display includes artefacts from the Staffordshire Hoard alongside other Anglo-Saxon objects, a mead hall, immersive film experience and game.

The exhibition was funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Tamworth Borough Council, the Friends of Tamworth Castle and Museum and Arts Council England.

The Staffordshire Hoard collection is jointly owned and cared for by Birmingham City Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council on behalf of the nation. The acquisition of the Staffordshire Hoard was supported by the Art Fund and The National Heritage Memorial Fund.

www.tamworthcastle.co.uk

Creative People and Places

Creative People and Places focuses on parts of the country where involvement in creativity and culture is significantly below the national average. It funds partners in local areas to empower residents to decide what kind of creative activity they want to experience on their doorstep.

Across Staffordshire Creative People and Places programmes are active in Newcastle-under-Lyme and in the Staffordshire Moorlands delivered by OUTSIDE.

The projects place local people and communities at the heart of decision making. Through approaches such as co-production, community partnerships, and people-centred programming, they aim to minimise barriers to engagement and provide access to arts for everyone.

www.outsidearts.org

Brampton Museum and Art Gallery

An award-winning museum which features over 2000 years of borough history. The museum includes a changing exhibitions programme, galleries displaying local history collections and a year-round events programme. Following a recent £850,000 redevelopment funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Newcastle Civic Society, Appetite, and Friends of Brampton Museum, the museum has opened a new gallery space, café and shop, and research room all powered by solar panels and a new air source heat pump.

www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/museum



Brampton Museum and Art Gallery

Museum of Cannock Chase

Once home to the Valley Colliery, the museum's grounds were a training pit where thousands of men started their careers in the local coal industry. The training pit is no longer. Instead, they have over 30 acres of green space and scenery on the edge of Cannock Chase and near the Hednesford Hills Nature Reserve. The hills are one of the last areas of lowland heathland in the UK.

www.inspiringhealthylifestyles.org



The Museum of Cannock Chase

Panto at The Garrick Theatre, Lichfield



Lichfield Festivals

Lichfield District is an attractive location that hosts many successful events each year including the Bower, the Lichfield Proms in Beacon Park, the Lichfield Food and Drinks Festival, the Cathedral Illuminated and the Lichfield Festival.

A highlight is Lichfield Festival that runs an 11-day summer multi-arts festival, a springtime literature festival, a chamber music weekend and an annual Christmas concert. The Young Artists series showcases and supports talented musicians in their early careers, and the ASPIRE! programme works with schools, community groups and charities on a wide range of projects across the year.

A Lichfield District Council study highlighted the impact of special events, which generated an economic impact of £9.2 million per year and attracted over 350,000 visits (2018/19).

www.visitlichfield.co.uk

The Philip Astley Centre for Circus and Performing Arts

The Philip Astley Centre, funded by UKSPF through Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, is the world's first heritage centre dedicated to the legendary showman.

The eagerly anticipated Philip Astley Centre opened its doors to the public on March 9, 2024. Located in the heart of Newcastle-under-Lyme at 23/25 Merrial Street, the centre is a hub of circus celebration, heritage, and education.

Visitors have the opportunity to participate in workshops and classes on various circus skills, including juggling, hula-hooping, and plate-spinning.

There are also interactive exhibits showcasing the evolution of the circus from its humble beginnings to the spectacle it is today.

Inspired by the pioneering work of Andrew Van Buren and his family, The Philip Astley Project Steering Group was officially formed in 2014 by Cllr Wenslie Naylor and Andrew Van Buren. This initiative united local groups, organisations and individuals to celebrate Philip Astley in Newcastle-under-Lyme, and beyond.

The Philip Astley Projects Community Interest Company (PAP CIC) was set up in 2018 to

consolidate the work of the steering group. PAP CIC is led by a passionate and dedicated Board of Directors, supported by members of the original steering group.

www.philipastley.org.uk



Statue of Philip Astley



The New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

New Vic Theatre

The New Vic Theatre is one of the country's most successful producing theatres, delivering a programme of international-class work in-the-round alongside award-winning community and education programmes, and a varied line-up of one-night events.

The current building is famous as the first purpose-built in-the-round intimate 600-seat auditorium in Europe.

Work has developed an increased national and international reach with productions transferring to London and Manchester, and partnerships formed with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre Studio.

Internationally, the New Vic's Borderlines and Education teams have been invited to work as far afield as Canada and Japan and have formed innovative research partnerships with universities in the UK, Europe and Asia.

Borderlines

New Vic Borderlines is an award-winning initiative using theatre in social contexts. It works regionally, nationally and internationally, and is acknowledged as a national model for the ways theatre can be used to work within the community.

It uses theatre to help people find new and positive ways to understand themselves, their communities and their social responsibilities. It challenges destructive and anti-social behaviour, builds self-awareness and self-worth and develops positive attitudes.

Projects are undertaken in partnership with the widest range of voluntary and statutory agencies.

Recent partners have included: British Council, British Crime Concern, Citizenship Foundation, Crown Prosecution Service, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Keele University, Magistrates Association, local authorities, National Association for Youth Justice, Warsaw University, international health consortia in Latvia, Finland and Holland.

Dementia and Creativity Group

Meeting weekly on Thursday mornings, the sessions give those with dementia and their partners, carers or companions, an opportunity to explore different ways of expressing themselves through the arts with the aim of improving their wellbeing, as well as motor skills, memory and problem solving.

www.newvictheatre.org.uk



Dementia and Creativity group at the New Vic

Staffordshire Moorlands Walking Festival

The Staffordshire Moorlands Walking Festival offers more than 40 exciting, interesting and intriguing walks and events, put on by a variety of local organisations and businesses, showcasing what a great place the area is to walk and to visit.

The walks range from easy through to challenging, including the ever-popular Staffordshire Three Peaks challenge.

Visitors can discover the breathtaking landscapes of the Staffordshire Moorlands and the southern Peak District, meander through the Manifold Valley and explore the Churnet Valley.

Walk leaders and guides help to share the area's rich history and heritage, and visitors can enjoy the characterful market towns of Biddulph, Chedale and Leek.

www.staffsmoorlandswalkingfestival.co.uk

National Memorial Arboretum - Living Memorial

The National Memorial Arboretum, a UK registered charity and 150-acre visitor site on the edge of the National Forest in Staffordshire, welcomes over 300,000 visitors annually, including over 20,000 young people for learning visits. Visitors can explore over 400 memorials nestled among 25,000 trees, enjoy riverside walks, and participate in various activities such as guided walks, land train tours, memorial talks, exhibitions, and buggy tours.

Each year, around 250 events take place on site, ranging from intimate services of remembrance to major events like Armistice Day, Remembrance Sunday, summer proms, and Armed Forces Day.

In response to huge public demand, the National Memorial Arboretum and the National Forest Company have unveiled ambitious plans for a new living memorial to honour service, sacrifice, and the lives lost during the pandemic.

It will be a place for people to remember their loved ones, recognise the bravery and dedication shown by key workers and members of the NHS, and reflect on the impact that it has had on all of our lives.

The development of a further 25-acres of land to the north end of the existing Arboretum is part of

a new ambitious vision for modern remembrance which has sustainability, accessibility, and inclusion at its core. Neighbouring quarry operator Tarmac has donated the 25-acre plot on which the new living memorial will be created.

www.thenma.org.uk



The National Memorial Arboretum

Sports



Stafford Half Marathon



St George's Park

The home of England's national football team

Built in 2012 for £105m, St. George's Park is the proud home to all 23 of England's national football teams.

Set within 330 acres of Staffordshire countryside, the site boasts no less than 14 elite outdoor pitches, including an exact replica of the Wembley surface, a full-sized Indoor 3G and a futsal arena.

Physical preparation and sport science are integral to the National Football Centre with state-of-the-art performance and recovery facilities providing the ultimate training and rehabilitation hub.

St. George's Park is also the home of England Football Learning, with the majority of elite coaching and medical courses delivered on site.

www.thefa.com

St George's Park, Burton Upon Trent

JCB Golf (LIV Golf UK)

After opening in 2018, JCB Golf and Country Club hosted LIV Golf UK in July 2024, welcoming some of the world's best players to their course. The event hosted an international field of 54 golfers and provided an opportunity for golf fans around the world to visit Staffordshire.

www.jcbgolfandcountryclub.com

Together Active

Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands

Together Active is an independent charity and the Active Partnership for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. They work in collaboration with partners from systems across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to forward their vision.

They work to use physical activity as a tool to improve the lives of some of the most overlooked and unheard populations by working across three priority areas: Health and Wellbeing, Social Inclusion and Powerful Communities.

Their work focuses on population groups who experience one or more of the following: mental distress, a long-term physical health condition, low or no income, exclusion as a result of gender identity and/or race.

www.togetheractive.org

Brough Park Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project

The Brough Park Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project in Staffordshire Moorlands has been awarded approximately £10 million to upgrade and expand the facilities on offer and create a Health and Wellbeing Hub to engage more people in physical activity and positive lifestyle choices.

www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk

Creative Industries

Staffordshire Film Office

The Staffordshire Film Office is being launched and operated by We Are Staffordshire - the county's place marketing organisation - which is made up of the county and all eight district and borough councils, as well as representatives from over 200 businesses including a private sector-led Place Board.

The organisation recently marked the end of its three-year pilot and start of a new chapter, having raised £90,000 in funds from the private

sector and district and borough council partners to continue its work.

Staffordshire County Council is investing £300,000 in the three-year pilot programme to set up the film office, which will be launched next year.

From then on it is expected the office will be funded through its own income generation.

www.wearestaffordshire.co.uk



Weston Park

Communities

As the cultural offer in Staffordshire continues to evolve and develop, the voluntary sector will play a vital role in helping to ensure culture is inclusive and is for everyone.

Key organisations helping to embed the cultural offer are:

Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Service (SCVYS)

SCVYS offers practical support to individuals and groups, which is bespoke and proactive, enabling the voluntary sector to be stronger, safer and more sustainable. SCVYS's responsive support enhances the capability of groups to deliver quality services and activities to encourage the personal and social development of children, young people and families.

www.staffscvys.org.uk

Support Staffordshire

Support Staffordshire empowers communities to be the best they can be.

They support Staffordshire communities, individuals and organisations to work in collaboration to bring about positive change in their community by actively encouraging social action.

They work to deliver the four functions of Local Infrastructure as recognised and promoted by the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA):

- › Volunteering
- › Capacity Building
- › Partnerships and Collaborations
- › Leadership and Advocacy

www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk

Staffordshire in Numbers



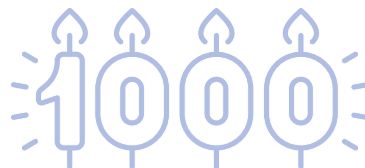
population
of Staffordshire
876,000



1/2 million
acres of rural
rolling landscape



8
eateries in the
Michelin Guide



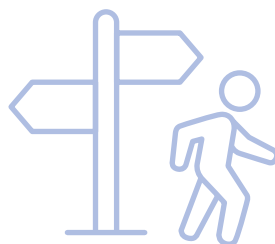
1,000+
years of history
and heritage



43
libraries in
Staffordshire, including
27 community
managed libraries



4,290
cultural sector
employment across
Staffordshire
and Stoke-on-Trent



1,244
miles of long-distance
walks that run
through Staffordshire



658
volunteers supporting
the Libraries and Arts
and Archives and
Heritage Services



3,470
people referred into
primary care social
prescribing to improve
health and wellbeing



OVER
13,300
collections stored
and managed by
Staffordshire
Archives and Heritage



OVER
£93m
received in Levelling Up
across the county



18m
invested in green
spaces across the county



70+
heritage attractions



No 1
we are the only county
with a National Park
(Peak District)
National Landscape
(Cannock Chase)
and the National Forest



£202.6m
of countywide
investment
secured for town
projects/capital works

In Staffordshire (excluding Stoke-on-Trent
and the Peak District National Park) we have:



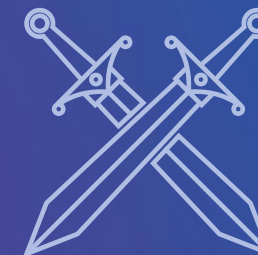
4,706
listed buildings



186
scheduled monuments



15
registered parks
and gardens



2
registered battlefields



148
conservation areas

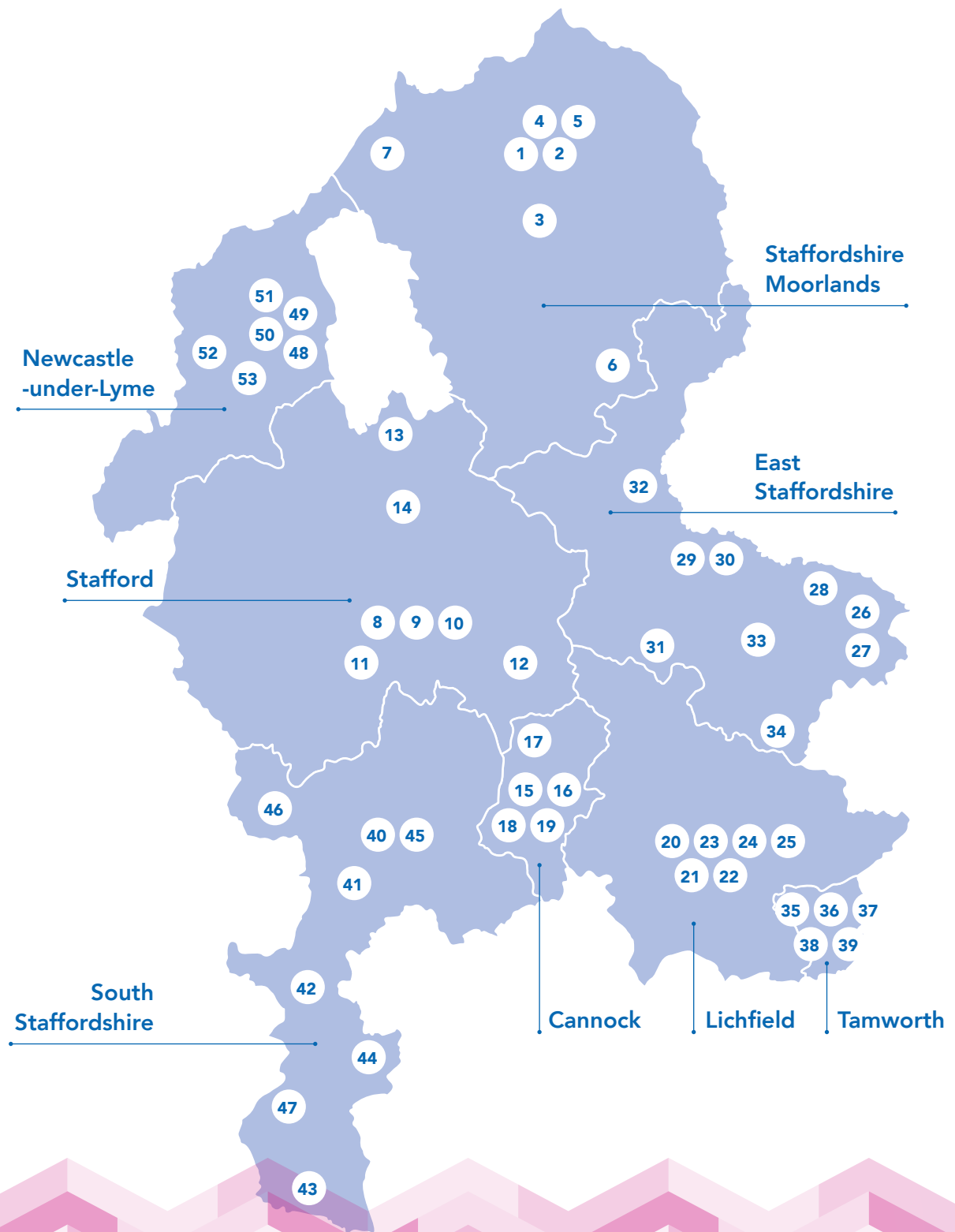


Approximately
12,000
non-designated heritage assets
including archaeological sites
and non-listed historic buildings

Asset Map

Culture doesn't recognise boundaries, it is spread across age groups, communities and regions. Staffordshire's large geographical area includes rural and urban areas, each with their own needs.

This map is not intended to be exhaustive. It highlights some of our assets and provides a better understanding of where they are, to identify gaps and opportunities for development.



Staffordshire Moorlands

District Council

- 1 Foxlowe Arts Centre
- 2 Nicholson Institute
- 3 Staffordshire Moorlands Walking Festival
- 4 Brough Park Leisure Centre
- 5 Leek Arts Festival
- 6 Alton Towers Resort
- 7 Biddulph Grange Gardens

Stafford Borough Council

- 8 Gatehouse Theatre and Shakespeare Festival
- 9 Staffordshire History Centre
- 10 The Ancient High House
- 11 Stafford Castle
- 12 Shugborough Hall and Estate
- 13 World of Wedgwood
- 14 Stone Food and Drink Festival

Cannock Chase District Council

- 15 Prince of Wales Theatre
- 16 Museum of Cannock Chase
- 17 Cannock Chase National Landscape
- 18 Saredon Studios Artist Workshops
- 19 Cannock Cultural Compact

Lichfield District Council

- 20 Lichfield Cathedral
- 21 Lichfield Garrick Theatre
- 22 Samuel Johnson Birthplace
- 23 Erasmus Darwin House
- 24 Lichfield Festivals
- 25 The Hub at St Mary's and Lichfield Library

East Staffordshire District Council

- 26 The Brewhouse Arts Centre
- 27 Burton Library
- 28 Tutbury Castle
- 29 Acoustic Festival of Britain, Uttoxeter
- 30 Redfern's Cottage, Uttoxeter
- 31 Abbots Bromley Horn Dance
- 32 JCB Liv Golf
- 33 St George's Park FA centre
- 34 National Memorial Arboretum

Tamworth District Council

- 35 Tamworth Castle
- 36 Tamworth Assembly Rooms
- 37 Drayton Manor Resort
- 38 Tamworth Drama Festival
- 39 Tamworth Snowdome

South Staffordshire District Council

- 40 Brewood Music Festival
- 41 Codsall Community Arts Festival
- 42 Perton Science Fair
- 43 Kinver Rock Houses
- 44 Baggeridge Country Park
- 45 Chillington Hall and Estate
- 46 Weston Park
- 47 Staffordshire Wildlife Trust at Highgate Common

Newcastle Borough Council

- 48 New Vic Theatre
- 49 Brampton Museum
- 50 Philip Astley Centre for Circus and Performing Arts
- 51 Apedale Country Park
- 52 University of Keele - ArtsKeele
- 53 Creative People and Places



FRONTLINE Dance performing at Staffordshire Libraries
Photo | Outroside Photography

Partners

Staffordshire County Council will lead this strategy and push for changes in policy, delivery frameworks, and other initiatives.

This strategy exists because of collaboration between Staffordshire people, cultural organisations, businesses, groups, charities and more.

‘Our Collective Culture’ highlights collaboration and advocacy as key themes.

This strategy cannot succeed without partnership working, so we will continue to build on our current working relationships and seek new avenues for collaboration where needed to deliver this vision.

Delivery partners are to be further defined, though they will likely include:

Artists, Creatives and Arts Organisations

Heritage Groups, Organisations and Sites

Sports Leaders, Clubs, Groups and Venues

Health Sector

Voluntary Sector

Tourism Sector

Business Improvement Districts

Social Enterprises

Charities, Trusts and Foundations

Independent and Commercial Businesses

Property Developers and Landowners

Regeneration Specialists

Local Government

National Government

Funders

Join us on the journey

As a result of reading this strategy, if you are a creative, community, health, sports, heritage, skills or organisation that works with young people, a landowner, developer, or other interested party and want to connect with us at the County Council, please get in touch through Connected Libraries:

connectedlibraries@staffordshire.gov.uk

Engage in activities

Find out what's on right across the county.

Enjoy Staffordshire
www.enjoystaffordshire.com

and Staffordshire Connects
www.staffordshireconnects.info

If you would like to find out more, visit

www.staffordshire.gov.uk/culture

Or email

connectedlibraries@staffordshire.gov.uk