

PRESTON'S 12 YEAR CULTURAL STRATEGY

# SOMETHING'S BREWING



From Preston's Cultural Framework Board:

## CONTEXT & JOURNEY

In 2014 Preston City Council brought together a Cultural Framework Board, to establish Preston as a major centre for culture in the North West, to drive cultural ambitions and to commission a Cultural Framework for the sector. This will lead its activity and direction through to the next Guild in 2032.

The independent sector, the board and the council collectively decided to boldly and collaboratively develop this framework for the city, heralding the voices of Preston's artists, creatives and arts organisations. This galvanising process resulted in the establishment of The Brewtime Collective, a driving force behind this document. Led by Curious Minds, a process of consensus workshops was initiated in which all aspects of the city's creative and cultural actors were invited to consider and question the city's needs, barriers and desires with regard to a vibrant and forward-looking Cultural Framework.

Alongside this process Blaze, an organisation that supports the next generation of creative producers, consulted young people (12-24) on their vision for the cultural future of Preston. The Brewtime Collective also commissioned a sector mapping report, which contained recommendations regarding the development of the Cultural Framework. These documents are drawn together here to give an overview of the priorities discovered through this democratic process. Consideration has also been given to Arts Council England's new strategy Let's Create, Preston's new City Investment Plan and 'Remade', the Cultural Investment Strategy for Lancashire as key documents that surround these priorities.

The Brewtime Collective, a self-organised network of independent creative and cultural practitioners, has begun to pilot the concept of 'Prestoning', a term that celebrates the city's uniqueness, its generosity of spirit, desire for risk-taking and pioneering, and its grounded but ambitious approach to culture.

With this backdrop Preston is well placed to approach its post-covid recovery in the city with creative innovation.

The Guild is a significant cultural event in Preston dating back to 1179 and taking place every 20 years. Since 2015 Lancashire Encounter has sought to build an exciting annual event, which brings together all of the city and the county's finest arts and culture, hosting this beside national and international performances.

Our city also has an active community arts sector and a music scene which hosts not only mainstream but also underground and music and artforms.

Preston's range of cultural institutions, network of independent artists and creative industries throughout the city are committed to a renewed proposition for culture.

Preston is a vibrant city, which celebrates its diversity and its long-standing cultural traditions. It is a city that is not afraid to avoid conformity, and which persistently tests and innovates.

## PRESTON: A CULTURAL CITY

## PRIORITIES FOR PRESTON

Across the consensus workshops, the Blaze report and the Brewtime mapping report there is a comprehensive range of priorities which reveal the breadth of the sector, its shared ambitions and its awareness of the world in which it presently dwells. 117 artists engaged with these consensus workshops, collaboratively working to develop a cultural vision for Preston.

These priorities have been collated under four main headings:

-  **SUSTAINABILITY**
-  **CONNECTIVITY**
-  **WELLBEING**
-  **AMBITION**

Open up this document to read further and discover how we aim to address these four priorities. We have a plan of action to collectively establish a cultural sector that helps build a better Preston!



# SUSTAINABILITY

Preston needs a cultural sector which understands the ecological restrictions of working in a sustainable way. A sector which addresses the needs of our shared response to the climate emergency. A sector which builds on its successful engagement with all aspects of Preston's diverse communities. A sector which seeks sustainable income, and a sector which invests in the next generation of creatives.

## A sustainable sector will:

- Raise the confidence and profile of Preston's wonderful cultural sector and facilitate stronger collaboration between artists, communities and organisations.
- Highlight the aspirations of all young people for who culture includes gaming, influencers, fashion and self-generated content.
- Create opportunities for young people and support the artists and art forms of tomorrow.
- Invest in and support the development of existing organisations and creatives as well as new and emerging creatives.
- Encourage strong cultural leadership, which understands and continues to accentuate diversity, celebrating a diverse range of voices within, and without, the sector.

You can read the full scope of our four priorities in 'Preston's 12 Year Strategic Framework For Culture'.

The Something's Brewing website will also be the best place for you to keep up to date with all developments in the strategy.

A strong framework should support and contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of Preston's residents as, demographically, some of England's most deprived communities, including the artists and creatives who are the working hands of this cultural scene. This priority will grow partnerships and develop work with local communities in the everyday, not only in one-off annual events, intersecting alongside health partners, the voluntary sector, businesses, education and other sectors.

## A sector which prioritises wellbeing will:

- Acknowledge and address the prevalence of mental health issues amongst our populous, but particularly amongst young people.
- Seek out a range of diverse role models that fit Preston in the 21st Century and resonate across all communities.
- Show genuine care for artists by ensuring work is properly resourced in terms of time and finance.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the green spaces accessible from Preston's city centre and use these as cultural venues.
- Ensure that the contribution of voluntary groups and individuals to the fabric of Preston's arts and cultural life is recognised and respected when celebrating the arts sector.



# WELLBEING

# CONNECTIVITY



In both digital and physical terms Preston's cultural sector needs places to connect, to meet, to share, to collaborate and to promote its innovative, diverse and ambitious creative practice. Building and strengthening these connections is essential for the future of Preston.

## A connected sector will:

- Seek and unlock fit for purpose physical spaces for cultural activity in the city.
- Develop strong partnerships which connect policy makers to independent artists and all aspects of the sector in between, not only in a financial sense, but through skills exchange and collaboration.
- Utilise the new Preston Cultural Framework Board as a vehicle to lead change and development in the city and connect independent creatives and institutions together to realise the city's ambition.
- Connect to the strong community arts sector, understanding and identifying community values that bring cultures together to form a multicultural society.
- Provide a coordinated voice beyond the city connecting Preston to other major events throughout the county and beyond.

This document is available to access and read for free over on our website [www.somethingsbrewing.co.uk](http://www.somethingsbrewing.co.uk)

This is just the start. We are looking forward to transforming the cultural landscape of Preston. We hope you will join us!

In 2032, our city will support ambition. We will nurture artists from young to old and organisations from small to large, to flourish and create innovative, risk taking, edgy, subversive work. We will become a city of inspiring firsts. We want our city's ethos of ambition to permeate the culture and creativity in ALL aspects of the city.

## An ambitious sector will:

- Prize the arts and culture of our diverse communities which will be recognised as part of the whole British culture scene and will be integral and embedded not only at singular or separate events.
- Ensure that recruitment to workforce and structures is diverse and includes under-represented groups to help arts and cultural activity flourish. This includes a broad section of appointments e.g. libraries, museums, events management and representation at senior Board level decision making.
- Welcome experimentation and risk-taking.
- Invest in place making, leisure activities and cultural employment, which makes Preston a healthy, vibrant and enjoyable place to live and work.
- Take a leadership role in redefining what arts and culture means and the role it can play in all aspects of our lives and articulate this at a national level.

# AMBITION

