

Implementation

The Strategy will be implemented through various projects and activities and will be listed in the annual Action Plan for the Cultural Consortium.

The initiatives will vary over a period of time, and for more information regarding the Cultural Strategy or the work of the Cultural Consortium, contact will be developed by a range of different organisations that comprise the Cultural Consortium.



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Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2008-2018
making a difference



Foreword

Culture is the key to what makes Herefordshire the wonderful county it is, reflecting its distinctiveness and uniqueness. Engagement in cultural activity is a vital ingredient in the life of our community and the region as a whole and plays an important part in enhancing the civic pride of our county. The significant changes that are expected in Herefordshire over the next ten to fifteen years will provide a powerful driver for a renewed vision with culture at the heart of the county's rejuvenation.

Culture contributes to the priorities of creating successful communities and regeneration; it is instrumental in creating improvements in economic growth, supporting healthier communities, enabling older people to live fulfilled lives and creating safer and stronger communities. All of these outcomes are priorities for the Herefordshire Partnership.

The provision of cultural services is not the sole responsibility of one organisation. It is therefore appropriate that the Herefordshire Cultural Consortium, a group of organisations and individuals from across the county, have developed this Cultural Strategy in order to take a long term and strategic view of cultural provision. In practice, this means working together towards the common goal of improving cultural provision and making a difference for citizens of Herefordshire, with the cross directorate Council working involvement from the private, voluntary and education sectors and engagement from regional and national partners.

This document aims to present the collective vision and direction for all county cultural services in the next 10 years building on the previous strategy that was produced in 1999 and updated in 2004.

Front cover : Hampton Court (top left), Sculpture by Walenty Pytel (bottom), etc...

Rural Media Company *Raimonda Cioga-de-Almeida story*



Raimonda Cioga-de-Almeida first came to Herefordshire from Lithuania in the summer of 2000, to work on a farm picking strawberries as part of a student programme. Although her fellow migrant workers were really friendly, she was working so hard that she had neither the time off nor the opportunities to meet the local community.

After living in Portugal for three years, she returned to the county in 2005 with her daughter Julija (then aged 9), first living in a caravan on another farm and then moving into Hereford when she got a job as a care worker. There were still precious few chances to get to know Herefordshire people.

Learning to play the piano and accordion in front of teachers and audiences at her music school in Lithuania had helped to develop her confidence, Raimonda says, so when she heard that The Rural Media Company was looking for somebody from Eastern Europe to take part in a community film, Crafta Webb, she took a chance.

Having experienced some hostility and even outright racism while living in the county, she felt welcomed immediately by the Crafta Webb group. "People were really warm. They knew my name, they were shaking my hand and saying 'we've heard all about you!'"

Rural Media's Crafta Webb project had started in 2006 with a series of practical workshops in the

communities of Bredwardine, Staunton on Wye and Letton. It focused on the mystery of the 'lost village' of Crafta Webb, high on Bredwardine Hill, which local folklore suggests was established by impoverished economic migrants. Although it was mentioned by the famous Victorian diarist Reverend Kilvert, no-one actually knows what happened to the people who lived there, how they lived and what eventually made them leave.

The film's script which was developed in the community workshops drew parallels with 21st century rural life by centering on the story of a migrant worker and her daughter. The script was originally written about a Polish woman, but after Raimonda came on board it was changed to reflect her own background and culture. "My own experiences changed the script," she says. "We added in Lithuanian language and details. I felt my opinion was important and I was one of the group."

Raimonda's contribution to the film was hugely significant, as producer/director Adrian Lambert acknowledges. "She was the only person involved in the project who came from outside the immediate community, because we all felt it was important to bring somebody with those 'real life' experiences into the production."

Like any first-time actor, Raimonda found the process of rehearsals and filming challenging and exhausting. Her determination had been spotted early on by Adrian Lambert. "Previous acting experience in a project like this is not a requirement; for me it's always about the commitment someone can give a role, and Raimonda had that in spades!"

But it was ultimately very rewarding. "At the premiere, I felt very nervous – more nervous than standing in front of a camera! I knew when my scenes were coming up and I was getting hot and thinking 'Oh my God!' It was exciting and I was trying something new. I was proud at the end, not just for me but for all of us."