



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

# Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 3 February 2026

Report of Councillor Paul Stokes  
Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet  
Member for Leisure and Culture

## Proposed Events Programme 2026/27 (Subject to Budget Approval)

### Report Author

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### Purpose of Report

To present a proposed programme of cultural events, subject to budget approval, outlining indicative expenditure, strategic alignment, and distribution across the district.

### Recommendations

**The Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the proposed events calendar and consider making any further suggestions or amendments.**

### Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Connecting Communities Enabling Economic Opportunities Effective Council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 The programme of events is subject to approval of the budget proposals for 2026/27 which include an allocation for an Events Officer and an associated revenue budget. If these proposals are not approved or the amount is less than indicated, changes will need to be made to the plan, so it stays within the allocated budget.

*Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy s151 Officer.*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 There are no direct governance implications arising from this report. Any future delivery of events will be subject to budget approval, the appropriate procurement processes and the Council's established policies and procedures.

*Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager*

### ***Health and Safety***

- 1.3 The delivery of events will involve detailed planning to mitigate the operational risks associated with public events. This will include the development of appropriate risk assessments and method statements, staff training, and obtaining the appropriate permissions or licences. Where required events will also be subject to review at Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings

*Completed by: Philip Swinton, Head of Health, Safety, Compliance and Emergency Planning*

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

- 1.4 Delivery of events will involve the usual operational risks associated with public events. Risks will be assessed through appropriate risk assessments, method statements, licensing where required. The Council has its own public liability insurance for events that are run by the Council and where events are delivered in

partnership with third parties, they must also have their own adequate public liability insurance.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer

### ***Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion***

- 1.5 The proposed programme supports the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion by seeking to increase access to cultural activity across the district, particularly in areas of lower provision and where residents in rural areas are unable to travel. Activity is designed to be affordable and accessible.

Completed by: Jade Porter, Arts and Cultural Services Manager

### ***Community Safety***

- 1.6 For any outdoor or large-scale events, Public Protection and CCTV Officers are notified as part of the Event Management Plan. Security and safety staff will be employed where required as part of the risk assessment process.

Completed by: Ayeisha Kirlham. Head of Service- Public Protection

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1. South Kesteven District Council's Cultural Strategy sets out the Council's ambition to enable arts and culture to thrive across the district, supporting wellbeing, placemaking and community cohesion.
- 2.2. Members have previously expressed a desire to see a greater proportion of activity delivered outside of the arts venues, particularly through external, place-based events that are visible, accessible and free to attend.
- 2.3. It is recognised that the current cultural offer delivered directly by the Council provides limited activity in Bourne, the Deepings, and surrounding rural areas when compared to Grantham and Stamford. Addressing this imbalance, while remaining within available resources, is a key consideration in the development of the draft events programme for 2026/27.
- 2.4. During 2024 the Council commenced consultation with residents and arts practitioners in Bourne and the Deepings to better understand existing participation, barriers to engagement, and aspirations for future provision. The consultation identified a strong appetite for more locally delivered cultural activity, with distance, travel costs, and lack of awareness cited as key barriers to participation.

- 2.5. Respondents also expressed interest in a broad range of activities, including live theatre, cinema, creative workshops and family-focused events. The findings reinforced the need for flexible, outreach-based approaches rather than reliance solely on established arts venues.
- 2.6. The Council has also been able to test alternative approaches to cultural delivery through previous funding programmes. A programme of events was trialled in Grantham Market Place funded by the Future High Street Fund. This has provided valuable learning points and further demonstrated the impact and potential for outdoor and town-centre-based events. Feedback from participants, audiences and businesses was positive and has helped to shape the proposed programme of events for 2026/27.
- 2.7. The Council's Arts team has a track record of delivering successful externally funded cultural projects. During 2025 this included work such as 'The Whale', which was delivered using the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and demonstrated residents' appreciation and for high-quality cultural experiences in non-traditional settings.
- 2.8. The Council's outreach budget of £4,000 has supported district-wide initiatives including an Easter Egg trail in 2024. More recently, this funding supported 'Nature Makers' family days in Bourne and the Deepings, each attracting over 150 participants. These free events offered hands-on arts and crafts activities and demonstrated clear demand for inclusive, family-friendly cultural activity delivered locally.
- 2.9. Arts and cultural activity is widely recognised as having a positive impact on mental health, emotional wellbeing, and social connection. National research, including the UK HEartS Survey and analysis published by Culture Case, shows that participation in arts and cultural activity is associated with improved wellbeing, increased social connectedness and reduced experiences of loneliness. These benefits are particularly relevant where activity is accessible, local and inclusive, and where opportunities exist for people to come together through shared cultural experiences.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1. The aim of the proposed programme is not only to deliver high-quality cultural activity, but also to adopt delivery models that support longer-term sustainability and community ownership. For certain events, this will include working in a similar format to 'Thatcher Fest', where the Council plays an enabling and supporting role alongside local partners, community groups and volunteers. This approach will allow events to evolve over time into community-led initiatives, with the Council retaining a "seat at the table" rather than being the sole organiser.

- 3.2. The proposed budget is therefore intended to support legacy and development, enabling learning, testing, and the establishment of events and programmes that have the potential to continue beyond direct Council delivery.
- 3.3. Subject to future budget approvals, this approach would also allow flexibility in the programme, ensuring that planned activity can respond to community need and opportunity, rather than creating an expectation that the same events are delivered year on year. This will support a more resilient and diverse cultural offer across the district over the longer term.
- 3.4. Whilst some events are being replicated across towns and villages, this is not the case with the entire programme. Delivery of 'The Whale' project, identified that residents were not averse to travel to be able to participate in the experience. So, whilst events and activities have been spread evenly across the district, it is proposed these are varied and take account of what already exists in the surrounding area.
- 3.5. Whilst some events are being replicated across towns and villages, this is not the case with the entire programme. Delivery of 'The Whale' project, identified that residents were not averse to travel to be able to participate in the experience. So, whilst events and activities have been spread evenly across the district, it is proposed these are varied and take account of what already exists in the surrounding area.
- 3.6. Previously a budget of £30,000 was created for the remainder of the 2025/2026 financial year. The sum of £20,000 has already been committed and it is proposed, subject to approval, to carry forward the remaining £10,000 to financial year 2026/2027. The table below provides information on the events which have already taken place or are planned for the remainder of this financial year.
- 3.7. An interim officer has been employed and is responsible for delivering the events programmed in 2025/26.

## Events for financial year 2025/26

Event	Location	When	Predicted Spend (inc. VAT)		
Wassail Lantern Workshop	Stamford	3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2026	Workshop	£, 1,000	£1,100
			Marketing	£ 100	
Skate Skillz & BMX Display	Skate Parks: Bourne Grantham Stamford Deepings  BMX Track: Market Deeping	16 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2026	Art Workshops x5	£ 3,900	£8,000
			Skateboard Workshops	£ 960	
			BMX Stunt Show	£ 2,088	
			Marketing	£ 441	
			Venue Hire	£ 143	
			Portaloo Hire	£ 468	
Covid Remembrance	Grantham Stamford Bourne Deepings	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2026	Creation & Installation of 'wishing trees'	£ 10,000	£ 10,400
			Marketing	£ 400	

### 3.8. Stamford Wassail Date: 3 January 2026

#### Location: Stamford Community Orchard

The Stamford Wassail is an established, community-led event that has been delivered by the Stamford Community Orchard group for several years. The event is rooted in traditional winter customs and includes singing, dancing, readings and a procession into the orchard to bless the trees, raising funds and awareness to support the ongoing care of the orchard. Attendance at the event has grown steadily in recent years, reflecting wider national interest in traditional wassailing events.

For the January 2026 event, SKDC supported the existing programme by commissioning an additional one-off participatory element designed to enhance the audience experience and attract new audiences. This took the form of a lantern-making workshop and lantern procession delivered by Art Pop UK. The workshop element was fully booked, with 40 participants, and overall attendance at the Wassail was approximately 180 people, which is double the attendance of the previous year.

Promotion was supported through a combination of printed posters in locations close to the orchard, and digital marketing via the Stamford Arts Centre website and social media channels. This activity helped the Community Orchard group reach new audiences while retaining the community-led nature of the event.

### **3.9. Skate Skillz & BMX Display**

**Dates:** 16–21 February 2026

**Locations:**

16 February – Deeping St James Skate Park  
17 February – Stamford Skate Park  
18 February – Bourne Skate Park  
19 February – Grantham Skate Park  
21 February – Market Deeping BMX Track

This district-wide programme was designed to celebrate the opening of a new skate park in Grantham and to recognise the increased interest in skateboarding and BMX as a result of these being included in the Olympics. The events will combine professional skate skills tuition, street art workshops, and a BMX display, celebrating skate parks as important outdoor community spaces while encouraging safe and inclusive use of the facilities.

The programme is aimed to reach new audiences for the Council's cultural offer, particularly young people, while providing structured tuition to support new skaters and riders. Identical events are to be delivered at skate parks across the district, ensuring that residents in different locations have the opportunity to attend activity close to where they live.

Events will run between 11:00am and 2:00pm, with multiple skateboarding workshops available on a book-on-arrival basis throughout the day. The programme concludes with a BMX display event at Market Deeping, extending the reach of the programme to the south of the district.

### **3.10. National Covid Day of Reflection – Community Reflection Trees**

**Date:** From 8 March 2026

**Locations:** District towns

This project supports a national initiative and involves the creation of permanent “wishing” or “clootie” trees in towns across the district, providing dedicated spaces for reflection and remembrance in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. Each tree will be made from fabricated metal designed for outdoor installation, where members of the public will be invited to tie ribbons or strips of fabric to the branches in memory of loved ones based on folklore tradition.

The trees are intended to be installed in advance of 8 March 2026, with local stakeholders and community groups invited to host moments of reflection in each location. Once installed, the trees will remain available for use by community groups and residents and are designed to be reusable year on year and adaptable for other moments of collective reflection.

Artists from the Union Gallery in Grantham, who have experience in fabricating durable outdoor artworks, have been commissioned to design and produce the trees. At the time of writing, this initiative positions SKDC as the first local authority in Lincolnshire to establish permanent public memorials recognising the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Future Events Programme

3.11. The table below provides an indicative events programme for 2026/27. It is important to note that due to time restrictions and to allow a programme of events to be delivered from the commencement of the financial year, planning has already commenced for the Walking Festival and Car Shows planned for April and May 2026. This is due to the extensive planning and lead in time required to facilitate events.

Event	Location	When	Predicted Spend (inc. VAT)		
Walking Festival	All	April	Marketing	£ 500	£ 4,000 From 25-26 budget carried over
			Programmed Walks	£ 3,500	
Car Show	Grantham for Main Car Show	May	'Ride' Car Dance Show	£ 4,145	£ 4,645 25/26 budget
			Marketing	£ 500	
Sending Curated 'Rhubarb Theatre' Piece to 5 other locations as well as the 'Grantham' Car show.	Bourne (events Team), The Deepings (Frognall), Stamford (Round Table), Castle Bytham, Corby Glenn (Sheep Fair)	Throughout the year	Curation and 6 performances of new interactive family show.	£ 13,440	£13,440 26/27 Budget
Pop-Up Cinema x6	Villages & Deepings	Across the year	Marketing	£ 600	£ 12,700
			Cinema Hire	£ 10,000	
			Venue Hire	£ 1,200	
			Film Licenses	£ 900	
Village Art Club x5 'Remembering 100 Years' reflecting on the Queen's 100 <sup>th</sup> Birthday	Villages	Throughout the year	Workshops	£ 7,800	£ 8,300
			Marketing	£ 500	



Bike Night	Grantham	July/August	Stage	£ 6,000	£ 12,500
			Acts	£ 2,000	
			Marketing	£ 500	
			Security	£ 2,000	
			Road Closure	£ 2,000	
Outdoor Cinema x2	Bourne	August	Cinema Hire	£ 5,000	£ 8,500
			Entertainment	£ 3,000	
			Marketing	£ 500	
Silent Summer Disco	Bourne or Deepings	June/July	Entertainment	£ 2,000	£ 3,500
			Facilities	£ 1,000	
			Marketing	£ 500	
Folk Dance Festival	Stamford	August	Stage & Sound	£ 6,000	£ 9,000
			Entertainment	£ 2,500	
			Marketing	£ 500	
Lincolnshire Day	All	October	Programmed Activities	£ 8,610	£ 7,850
			Marketing	£ 500	
Newton & Cup Chess Tournament	All	September	Marketing	£ 200	£ 2,000
			Venues and infrastructure	£1,800	
'Have a Go' Skills Weekend	All	February/ March	Workshops	£ 5,000	£ 5,500
			Marketing	£ 500	
Silent Winter Disco	Bourne or Deepings	November/ December	Entertainment	£ 2,360	£ 4,100
			Facilities	£ 1,000	
			Marketing	£ 500	
Spooks & Ghosts Trails	All	October	Marketing	£ 600	£ 5,000
			Entertainment	£ 3,000	
			Creation of Spooks	£ 1,400	
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 92, 390</b>
				<b>26/27</b>	

## Event Information

### 3.12. Walking Festival

#### – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April

A series of walks running over two weeks (three weekends), including one week of the Easter holidays, and one week during term time.

The festival will feature a mix of walks run by community groups and local organisations, alongside artistic and theatrical walks programmed by the Council. This will include a promenade outdoor theatre performance of 'The Tempest' and 'Robin Hoodie'.

Invitations to run walks will be sent out to community groups who will complete a detailed application, which will be reviewed to create a safe, diverse, and inclusive programme. It is hoped to engage organisations such as local ramblers groups, history groups, artists, the Woodland Trust, and other established groups to put on

activity over this period. The festival will have a combination of free, and chargeable activity.

The aim is that the Walking Festival becomes a yearly, repeatable festival, whereby other organisers involved will want to continue participating. This framework is similar to how Thatcher Fest worked with community buy in, ownership and by developing a programme of events that doesn't solely rely on SKDC delivering them.

**Target Audience:** Non-users of SKDC venues, Family groups, Residents in rural locations

**Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increased participation in culture
  - *Programming cultural activities in more accessible settings to reduce perceived barriers*
  - *Providing free of charge activity giving access to those on lower incomes*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences & increasing audiences from under-represented groups
  - *Providing free of charge activity giving access to those on lower incomes*
  - *Working collaboratively with community groups to reach under-represented groups*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
  - *Building a strong network of community partners to deliver activity during the festival*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages of South Kesteven
  - *Working collaboratively with community groups to offer activities in locations across the district*
- Increasing awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of culture in terms of reducing isolation, combatting mental health issues and promoting positive activity and enjoyment
  - *Creating opportunities for community connection*
  - *Working with mental health and wellbeing support groups to programme walks with this focus*

**3.13. Car Show**

**– Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026 – Grantham, Wyndham Park**

Research has shown that most major towns, and many villages, already have existing annual car shows. Grantham was the only place identified where a large car show was not currently an existing offer.

The proposal is to run a car show in Grantham, in collaboration with Grantham Car Club, with additional entertainment to widen the audience and appeal. May has

been identified as the optimum time for this to be scheduled to avoid competing with existing shows and to hopefully draw in a wider audience.

Entertainment will include 'RIDE Dance Show' by Zoellogic Dance, with the aim of introducing a different audience to dance. A new interactive family piece from Rhubarb Theatre Company is also being commissioned to complement the event. This will involve children being invited to put on a 1930s vintage car costume, and take a 'driving test', following a slightly eccentric driving instructor around a specially designed test track!

The Rhubarb Theatre activity will then be offered to other car shows within the district as listed below to complement the existing activity. This will be funded from the events budget.

- Bourne event in June 2026 – Run by the Bourne Town Events Team, this is a community focused event taking place in Wellhead Park and the grounds of the Red House.
- The Deepings event in May – Arranged by The Goat at Frognall and situated in the large pub car park.
- Stamford event in August – Run by the Stamford Round Table, this event is held on Stamford Meadows.
- Castle Bytham – 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> June – Displays of classic cars form part of the very busy midsummer festival which runs through the village.
- Corby Glen – 5<sup>th</sup> October – A small display of classic cars forms part of the Sheep Fair event which runs through the centre of the village.

**Target Audience:** Non-users of the Council's arts and cultural venues, families, residents, visitors and members of local car clubs.

#### **Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in culture
- *Adding arts/culture activities to existing car shows adding to the audience experience*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
- *Reaching existing car show audiences by providing supplementary activity*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
- *Providing free activity in locations across the district*
- *Appeals to a male demographic which is often underrepresented in arts audiences*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
- *Building partnerships with car clubs and community events across the district*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages of South Kesteven

- *Adding arts/culture activities to existing car shows in towns and villages across the district*

### 3.14. **Pop-Up Cinema and Outdoor Cinema**

#### **– Throughout the year, dates to be confirmed**

When reviewing the arts participation survey completed by residents from Bourne and the Deepings, there was a clear desire for a cinema offer in rural locations across the district.

It is proposed the Pop-Up Cinema will be set up in community settings and provide 6 screenings, working with churches, heritage venues, libraries, and other community venues.

The 2 outdoor screenings would be held in Bourne utilising an outdoor space across two days in the Summer Holidays. The suggestion is to utilise earlier screenings for family audiences, whilst later screenings are targeted towards adults.

The outdoor screenings will also have additional wrap around activities for the family screenings, including interactive workshops or crafts sessions, themed around the film being shown.

A small number of caterers will be invited to attend the outdoor film screenings to provide snacks and refreshments. To remain accessible, audiences will also be allowed to bring their own refreshments to the screenings.

Each screening will be ticketed at a small fee to gain commitment from attendees, with the ticket income, minus admin fee, being given to the venue to cover their operating costs. The events budget will cover the costs of equipment hire and film licensing. For the larger outdoors events there is a budget set aside for venue hire if required, and in this instance SKDC will keep any revenue from ticket sales to offset this cost.

After the events it is proposed that conversations are developed with the community venues involved about starting a longer-term community cinema project, using the data and experience gathered from the pop-up event to provide proof of concept, and potentially provide support for funding applications to purchase or hire equipment to continue delivery.

**Target Audience:** Residents in rural locations – Bourne & the Deepings, Non-users of the arts venues

#### **Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
- *Providing low-cost cinema offers in rural areas*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
- *Providing low-cost cinema offers in rural areas*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
- *Working closely with community venues to support long-term activity*
- Providing value for money
- *Planning in place to support venues to continue activities*

- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages across the district
- *Providing low-cost cinema offers in rural areas*
- *Working outside of the existing venues*

3.15. **Village Art Club – Celebrating the last 100 years in memory of Queen Elizabeth II**  
**– Dates to be confirmed**

It is proposed that art workshops will be provided in villages across the district where participants will create pieces that can be displayed in windows or front gardens to create an art trail. This event provides opportunity for participants to physically create art and builds a sense of community pride through the display of artworks.

The workshops will be inspired by the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Elizabeth II with artworks created being a reflection on the past 100 years.

The workshops will be open to people of all ages and abilities, with the focus being more on adult audiences. The resulting art trails will be marketed across the district to encourage people to visit rural locations.

Lumo Workshop (An artistic community project organisation) will be commissioned to run the village art clubs in Ancaster, the Deepings, Long Bennington, Folkingham, and Castle Bytham.

**Target Audience:** Residents in rural locations, non-users of the arts venues

**Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increased participation in cultural activity
- *Bringing hands on artistic experiences to residents in village locations*
- Improving the cultural and visitor economy
- *Bringing people to the villages through the promotion of the resulting arts trails*
- *Reaching new and diverse audiences*
- *Directing offers at residents who might not be able to reach the visitor venues*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
- *Working with parish councils and community groups to target offer to under-represented groups*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages across the district
- *Working in villages across the district*
- Providing value for money
- *Addition of the art trail made up of works from Village Art Club members to encourage visitors to the villages*
- Increasing awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of culture in terms of reducing isolation, combatting mental health issues and promoting positive activity and enjoyment

- *Working with parish councils and community groups to target the offer to under-represented groups*
- *Creating a feeling of community with people working towards a shared public exhibition*

### 3.16. **Bike Night**

#### **– July/August, Date to be confirmed**

Following on from the success of the Grantham Bike night in August 2025 it is proposed to host a similar event at the start of the school holidays. The event would be delivered in partnership with Chris Walker Motorcycles once again. The event will be held in Grantham in the marketplace and will require a road closure and security, which is where the majority of the budget will be required. A stage and appropriate live music will also be provided to enhance the overall experience.

The aim is to work with existing businesses in Grantham Marketplace to provide catering for the event, with the bars and take-aways being encouraged to remain open to meet the needs of all attendees.

Working with local partners and businesses means this event could in future, be something organised by the Town Team or local Motorcycle businesses with support from the Council, rather than the Council being solely responsible for its provision.

**Target Audience:** Grantham residents, non-users of the arts venues

#### **Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
- *Reaching lower income audiences with free programming*
- *Holding arts events in easy to reach locations*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
- *Reaching lower income audiences with free programming*
- *Booking live music from local artists*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
- *Reaching lower income audiences with free programming*
- *Appealing to a male demographic which is often underrepresented in arts audiences*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
- *Working closely with locally businesses to cater the event*
- *Partnership working with local retail and hospitality providers*

### 3.17. **Silent Discos (Summer Outdoor and Winter Indoor)**

#### **– dates to be confirmed**

These events would be in two parts, one in summer in an outdoor location, the other during winter in an indoor location.

They will be aimed at young people (18 – 35), with a DJ, and music selected to appeal to this age group.

The aim is to deliver these events in areas where there currently is minimal provision for young audiences, mainly within rural areas.

Alongside the disco there will be food/drink stalls and, if required, at the chosen location, toilet facilities.

**Target Audience:** Young people

**Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
  - *Targeting activity at young audiences*
  - *Keeping tickets at an affordable price*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
  - *Targeting activity at young audiences*
  - *Programming music that is not normally suitable for the visitor venues*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
  - *Targeting younger audiences who are often underrepresented*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages across the district
  - Providing opportunities outside of the arts venues
  - Taking this opportunity to a rural location
- Increasing awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of culture in terms of reducing isolation, combatting mental health issues and promoting positive activity and enjoyment
  - *Creating opportunities for people to come together*
  - *Targeting audiences in semi-rural and rural areas aiming to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness which impact mental health*
  - *Targeting young people who are at risk of social isolation leaning into data published by the Youth Futures Foundation, 2023*

**3.18. Folk Dance Festival**

**- August, dates to be confirmed**

It is proposed to showcase folk dance from a diverse mix of cultures over a summer holiday weekend in Stamford, this will include indoor and outdoor performances all of which will be free for audiences to enjoy. Alongside performances, participatory workshops will be hosted for people to try a new style of dance. These sessions will be led by local dance groups and can be utilised by them to recruit new dancers. Larger participatory dances, including ceilidhs and social dances, will be programmed using the events budget.

Other venues in the town will be encouraged to host music sessions or book musical acts working in collaboration with the event and widening its reach.

**Target Audience:** Families, residents from a wide range of cultures

**Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
  - *Creating low cost and free opportunities to enjoy the arts*
  - *Collaborate with community groups from a broad range of cultures*
- Improving the cultural and visitor economy
  - *Encouraging visitors from the wider region*
  - Reaching new and diverse audiences and increasing audiences from under-represented groups
  - *Representing the broad range of cultures within South Kesteven*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
  - *Collaborating with community groups from a broad range of cultures*
- Increasing awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of culture in terms of reducing isolation, combatting mental health issues and promoting positive activity and enjoyment
  - *Reducing isolation by creating a space for diverse communities to come together*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages of South Kesteven
  - *Providing cultural activities outside the arts venues*
  - *Creating low-cost opportunities to enjoy the arts*

**3.19. Lincolnshire Day**

**- October**

A collaborative programme of activities is proposed to commence on Lincolnshire Day (1<sup>st</sup> October) and culminate the following weekend (4<sup>th</sup> October). This celebration will take a partnership approach where community groups and local venues will be encouraged to run activities across the district.

Activities to include:

- Lincolnshire themed markets across the district working with the SKDC Markets Team
- Banner making workshops with schools in the Deepings culminating in a procession over the weekend
- *'Henry VIII Used to Hate Us'* – a Lincolnshire history theatre show to be performed in Bourne
- Rhubarb Theatre Bourne History Walk
- Talks and walks – run by civic societies or other community groups
- Art shows from community art groups
- Music from local performers – encouraging pubs and venues to book bands as well as open mic events across the district

**Target Audience:** Families in Bourne & the Deepings, schools in the Deepings, residents from across the district.



**Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
  - *Providing a diverse mix of activities across the district*
  - *Reaching low-income audiences through the provision of free or low-cost activities*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
  - *Working alongside community groups to programme activities*
  - *Reaching low-income audiences through the provision of free or low-cost activities*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
  - *Working with community groups who are working with under-represented groups*
- Improving the cultural and visitor economy
  - *Supporting venues across the district*
  - *Supporting artists across the district*
  - *Creating events which will bring people into the district*
  - *Promotion of the district*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
  - *Working alongside community groups to programme activities*
  - *Supporting venues and artists across the district*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages across the district
  - *Programming activities in locations across the district*

**3.20. Spooks and Ghosts Trail**  
**- 24<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November**

It is proposed to commission artists across the district to create Halloween creatures which will be displayed in shop windows in each of the towns (Bourne, Market Deeping, Stamford, Grantham) across the district during the October half term.

During the week of the trail, family activities will be hosted in each town to wrap around the Halloween trail. The activities provided will include themed crafts and face painting, which has previously been well received in previous years with the Nature Days and Egg Trails.

**Target Audience:** Families across the district

**Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
  - *Providing activities outside of the SKDC arts venues*
  - *Creating access for low-income audiences by providing free activities*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
  - *Creating access for low-income audiences by providing free activities*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
  - *Marketing to family support groups working with under-represented groups*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships

- *Collaborating with artists and businesses across the district to create an exciting trail*
- Improving the cultural and visitor economy
- *Creating reasons to visit towns across the district*
- *Promotion of businesses across the district*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages across the district
- *Activities across the district for local residents to access*
- *Creating access for low-income audiences by providing free activities*

### 3.21. **Newton 300 Commemoration and Chess Tournament**

Meetings started in early February 2025 with interested community groups, educational establishments and other parties to set up a stakeholder group to mark the 300<sup>th</sup> year of Newton's death. This will work in a similar way to 'Thatcher Fest' whereby events and activities are brought together to create a festival feel but is likely to be on somewhat of a larger scale. The Guildhall Arts Centre will be programming a series of science related workshops across the summer holidays in 2027, with a science schools show in late July 2027. There will also be a lecture, speaker, or relevant theatre piece in the theatre in September of that year.

The events budget will fund the provision of a 'Newton Chess Tournament' that will have final played in early 2027 in the Newton Hall at the King's School. Conversations have begun with the English Chess Federation to potentially facilitate and provide the infrastructure for a district wide event, with an initial heat held in each town.

Alongside the tournament, the aim is to invite a chess master to play a simultaneous match with several young people from across the district.

**Target Audience:** Young people, schools, people who don't normally attend traditional theatre events

#### **Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increasing participation in cultural activity
- *Working with schools to increase youth participation in the 2027 chess tournament*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
- *Working with schools to increase youth participation in the 2027 chess tournament*

### 3.22. **'Have a Go' Weekend - September 2026**

It is proposed to invite artists and makers from across the district to run workshops for their local communities by way of introductory sessions, providing the opportunity to learn new skills. Some of these workshops will be funded by the events budget and be offered free of charge for participants, reducing the barrier to entry for lower income audiences. Other workshops might be run entirely by local businesses or community groups, which are likely to have a charge.

This series of workshops will give residents the chance to try new crafts/learn new skills from local experts, while showcasing talented individuals from across the district. They will be aimed primarily at adult audiences with events being held across a weekend in September, allowing a back to school feel to the marketing. The goal is to introduce residents to new skills and hobbies, whilst also potentially encouraging artists to start up permanent classes in new areas with support from the Council.

Suggested crafts/skills might include: wood working, print making, miniature painting, willow weaving, knitting/crochet, sewing, book binding, jewellery making, poetry and chess.

**Target Audience:** Adults with an interest in arts/crafts, People with lower incomes who might not typically be able to engage in these activities.

#### **Cultural Strategy Links:**

- Increased participation in cultural activity
  - *Providing opportunities to take part in the arts*
- Reaching new and diverse audiences
  - *Reaching low-income audiences by providing a good range of free or low-cost activities in locations which are easy to access without the need for public transport or driving*
  - *Putting on a wide variety of activities which would appeal to a range of audiences*
- Increasing audiences from under-represented groups
  - *Providing a good range of free or low-cost activities in locations which are easy to access without the need for public transport or driving*
- Enabling strong links, collaborations, and partnerships
  - *Building relationships with local artists, makers, businesses, and venues across the district*
- Increasing opportunities for people to take part in and experience arts and cultural activity in the towns and villages across the district
  - *Providing activities across the district, including rural areas*

#### **General Considerations**

- 3.23. Participants in all the events will be asked to complete evaluations, as well as the artists and companies that are engaged as part of the delivery. This is important to be able to build on events in subsequent years and to diversify the programme offered, ensuring the needs and aspirations of our residents are met.
- 3.24. By engaging with local community groups, the aim is that responsibility for some events can be taken on at a local level, giving the events a legacy. This will allow any future events budget to concentrate on bringing new ideas and concepts to the district and increase the availability of cultural activity.

- 3.25. Where required, the event budget includes the costs associated with security, additional staffing, road closures, and first aid.
- 3.26. The proposed programme of events ensures a spread across the district balancing financial commitments per town/rural locations.
- 3.27. Marketing for events will be undertaken through a variety of methods including press releases, radio, Arts Centre websites, printed posters displayed in local areas and community hubs, banners, Arts Centre and Council social media pages, and flyers.
- 3.28. Event information will also be passed to community groups, relevant Parish and Town Councils for support in promoting to residents.

#### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 The proposed events programme is dependent on the budget being approved for financial year 2026/27 to support the recruitment of an Events Officer and an associated expenditure budget. Should this not be agreed Officers will continue to look for funding opportunities to deliver outreach activity and events across the district.

#### **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1. The events programme has been developed based on research undertaken by Officers to identify and address current gaps in cultural provision across the district, alongside feedback gathered through consultation with residents and practitioners in Bourne and the Deepings.
- 5.2. The proposed programme also builds on learning and evidence from previously delivered events and initiatives.
- 5.3. The programme offers a diverse range of cultural activity delivered across a wide geographic area, helping to improve access to arts and cultural events and balance provision within the district. The proposed programme is aligned with the objectives and priorities set out in the Council's Cultural Strategy and has been curated to complement and support its aims, while enabling learning, partnership working and future development.