

Heritage Action Plan



The Heritage Action Plan for Bradford District 2022—2031

Text only version

Heritage Action Plan

**Bradford District
2022–2031**

Commissioned by City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council in association with the Bradford Cultural Place Partnership, with funds from Bradford Council and The Heritage Fund

Introduction

Bradford District is experiencing a cultural renaissance and is facing the future with confidence, vigour and ambition, energised by our designation as UK City of Culture 2025.

Culture plays a part in everyone's lives and the development of Culture is Our Plan, our ten year cultural strategy, showed how important heritage - the assets, buildings, parks and landscapes, stories, archives and artefacts passed down by previous generations - is to our experience of culture. We asked thousands of people across Bradford District about the culture they valued and they told us that heritage activities were amongst their favourite things with 70% enjoying parks and nature, 65% visiting museums and 59% exploring our historic buildings.

When we asked what people were proud of and what they showed off to their friends and family, heritage assets dominated the top ten: Salts Mill, National Science and Media Museum, Roberts Park, Ilkley Moor, Bingley Five Rise Locks, Cartwright Hall, Bradford Industrial Museum, Bronte Parsonage and Keighley and Worth Valley Railway.

Research into visitors to the District revealed that 57% of people visit for cultural reasons¹ and spontaneous awareness of heritage assets dominated:

National Science and Media Museum 55%

Salts Mill 23%

Cartwright Hall 23%

Bradford Industrial Museum 22%

Bronte Parsonage Museum 21%

Saltaire Village 21%

So it seemed important to take a deeper dive into the heritage sector and to create a specific action plan for it. We are grateful to Heritage Lincolnshire (who were commissioned to engage with our stakeholders) and the many organisations and individuals who have given their time and opinion to help inform this plan.

Our vision for the heritage in our District is the same as for all dimensions of our culture: **Bradford will offer a new definition of art, culture and heritage that reimagines our District as a place that is knowingly different and radically alternative.**

¹ "Visiting an attraction, attending cultural events and festivals, Parks and Gardens, Theatre, place of architectural interest". Survey by NGI Solutions for Visit Bradford 2019

By 2031 we want to see:

- People living better and happier lives, having better mental health, skills and jobs and longer life expectancy
- A thriving, diverse and sustainable cultural and creative industries sector playing a leading role in the growing economic success of the District
- Our District as a destination of choice for people to experience exceptional cultural activity and to create exceptional work

Heritage has a vital role to play in the realisation of our bold vision for culture and in the delivery of City of Culture 2025.

1. Bradford's heritage on the national and international stage

Bradford District has heritage attractions which bring visitors from all over the country and the world

The District's heritage buildings and landscapes act as a backdrop to an increasing number of television and film productions and Bradford is one of the few places in the world to have not one, but two UNESCO designations; alongside Saltaire UNESCO world heritage site, as the world's first City of Film we are part of the UNESCO Creative Cities network.

Salts Mill and Saltaire

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Saltaire is a model of early progressive urban planning and a jewel in Bradford's crown. Saltaire sits on the banks of the River Aire and the towpath of the Leeds Liverpool Canal, - the M62 of its day. It is home to Salts Mill, the outstanding Congregational Church, Victoria Hall and the former hospital. Its homes were built with their own gas and water supplies and outdoor sanitation. The Mill opened in 1853, the centrepiece of Sir Titus Salt's utopian vision of Saltaire. He built the adjoining model village to house his workers. Cloth production at Salts finally ceased in 1986, and the following year the mill was purchased by the late Jonathan Silver, who re-imagined it as a place where culture and commerce could thrive together. In 2001, Saltaire became a UNESCO World Heritage Site. UNESCO noted: *"Saltaire is an outstanding and well-preserved example of a mid-19th century industrial town... The layout and architecture of Saltaire admirably reflect mid-19th century philanthropic paternalism, as well as the important role played by the textile industry in economic and social development."*

Salts Mills, home to a unique art collection and a partnership with David Hockney, is one of the world's best examples of repurposing heritage buildings to drive local regeneration, increase social capital and reverse industrial and retail decline. The mill, once the world's largest industrial building, is also a place of work for over 1000 people - home to a variety of businesses from technology to landscape architecture and graphic design.

David Hockney

David Hockney was born on July 9, 1937 in Bradford; he studied at Bradford School of Art between the ages of 16 and 20 (1953-57). Hockney is recognised internationally as an artist of importance, his work contributing to the history of art and continuing to inspire artists and be enjoyed by audiences throughout the world. He is commonly referred to as the 'world's greatest living painter' and the 'nation's favourite'.

In 2016, staff at Cartwright Hall Art Gallery started to consult with David Hockney and hundreds of local school children about what a gallery to celebrate the early work of the great artist should be like. The questions posed to him by Bradford children led to the creation of a £300,000 gallery and an 85% increase in visitor figures. It also transformed how people within Bradford District see their horizons: A Year 4 teacher at Bradford's St Oswald's Primary School said, 'It shows Hockney as an inspiration to Bradford school children, they are now aware that people from Bradford can be world leaders.'

National Science and Media Museum

"Bradford's national museum" is in the heart of the city and explores the science and culture of image and sound technologies and their impact on our lives. NGI research shows NSMM to be our most visited tourist attraction with more than 450,000 visitors pre-COVID.

NSMM aims to inspire the scientists and engineers of the future to see more, hear more, think more and do more. Its galleries and exhibition spaces investigate and celebrate photography, film, television, animation, videogames and sound technologies. Its team of Explainers create learning activities that fuel the imagination and get under the skin of our collections and exhibitions. And its three cinema screens—including an IMAX theatre—allow NSMM to showcase the magic of moving images from around the world in Bradford, the first UNESCO City of Film.

Bronte country

The international fame of the Bronte sisters and their works has put the Bronte Parsonage Museum (a nationally and internationally important museum), picturesque Haworth, and the surrounding area and dramatic moorland landscape, on the map for visitors from all over the world. This landscape is also the setting for the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway . This unique 5-mile branch line railway runs heritage steam and diesel trains from the industrial landscape of Keighley through the stunning Brontë Country to Oxenhope made famous in the movie *The Railway Children*.

2. Place making— local heritage to be proud of

"I think that the heritage is really complex, very deep and ingrained in the culture of the place and is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, asset in setting out Bradford's uniqueness and distinctiveness as a place"

Just as we discovered when talking to people about culture, heritage in Bradford means a lot of different things to many different people:

History, Stories, Memory, Local Distinctiveness, Heredity, Quality of life, Sense of place, Food, Family History, Music, Clothes, Photographs, Maps, Pride,

Documents, Famous People, Diversity, Art, Culture, Inheritance, Immigration, Biography, Buildings, Archaeology, Cohesion, Museums, Parks and Gardens, Landscape, Volunteers, Tourism, Skills, Sharing, Visitor Experience

Towns and villages

There are interesting and picturesque towns and villages across the District, each with a strong sense of local identity, unique heritage and stories to tell. From Keighley (the starting point of the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway – made famous by *The Railway Children*), to Ilkley (the famous 19C spa town and moor), Bingley (with its parks and 5 Rise Locks), Shipley and Baildon (with their markets and the Shipley Glen), and to Thornton (the birthplace of the Brontes) and Queensbury (one of the highest parishes in England and home to the internationally famous Black Dyke Mills Band – to name just a few.

Built heritage

"Value what we already have. PLEASE!"

Heritage buildings

Heritage buildings and mills are a part of the District's 's DNA. Bradford has a rich architectural heritage. We have 2,287 listed buildings across the District, including Grade I treasures like Bradford City Hall, St George's Hall, Saltaire Congressional Church, East Riddlesden Hall and Bolling Hall, which gets its first nod in the Domesday book. Our faith spaces – from our 15th century Cathedral sitting atop an eighth-century medieval site of worship, to our Victorian synagogue and our contemporary mosques, temples, and gurdwaras – help tell the story of a city built by generations of migrants. Saltaire, the Undercliffe Cemetery, and the 19C Italianate-style commercial buildings of Little Germany, all attract architectural pilgrimages from across the country.

Bradford city centre boasts the iconic gothic City Hall built in 1873 by architects Lockwood and Mawson who created physical representations of the prosperity, confidence and reforming zeal of "Woolopolis", one of the wealthiest cities in the country. Based in nearby Little Germany, now a conservation area home to innumerable listed buildings, their work also included St Georges Hall, the unique Wool Exchange and the model village of Saltaire. Later city centre buildings of note include the Alhambra Theatre, North Parade's former Yorkshire Penny Bank and the art deco Sunwin House.

Mills

Outside the city centre you rarely stray far from monuments to Bradford's role as a powerhouse of the industrial revolution such as Lister's Mill, formerly the largest silk mill in the world, now home to residential homes and community facilities. Right across the District former mills are finding new life as housing - for example, Victoria Mills in Shipley and Haworth's Ebor Mills; for commerce and leisure – Bradford's Cannon Mills and Keighley's Knowle Mills; and education –

Douglas Mill; others such as Allerton Mill continue to manufacture textiles.

Viaducts

The 126m tall Hewenden Viaduct, which formerly carried trains on a branch of the Great Northern Railway is now part of the Great Northern Railway Trail offering walks and outstanding views. Similarly, the 20 arch Thornton Viaduct is now on a popular walking route while the 7,500 foot Queensbury Tunnel is subject to a campaign for re-opening as a sustainable transport route between Bradford and Calderdale.

Regeneration

The potential for successful heritage regeneration can be seen in the refurbishment of St. Georges Hall. From 2016, this stunning Victorian Concert Hall underwent a three-year major refurbishment, with funding from Bradford Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. St George's Hall has a rich and fascinating past, and unique displays that weave along all four levels of the venue showcase key events from the official opening in 1853 to the big rock band concerts of the 1970s and 1980s.

Other examples of heritage building regeneration include the Eastbrook Hall development within Little Germany, the current transformation of the Odeon Cinema site into Bradford Live – set to be one of the country's best live entertainment venues - and of course Salts Mill's conversion to an arts and retails space. There is huge potential to make more of our other redundant heritage buildings, especially the wealth of mills across the District.

Landscape Heritage

Bradford's built heritage is matched by its outstanding landscape heritage which is a source of much local pride. As well as famous moors, the District has significant woodland cover, pastoral land and riverine environments. We know that a significant number of visitors to the District come here to enjoy our magnificent landscapes – moors, rivers, canals – as well as the qualities that the city centre, our built heritage and our wider cultural life have to offer.

Rivers and Canals

The rivers and canals running through Bradford District have had huge historical significance in its fortunes and development. Bradford was founded on the confluence of at least 5 rivers and streams - the name Bradford means a 'broad crossing' of a stream or beck - although today they are mostly hidden from view underground. As the population and industry grew there was a need for larger waterways and the (now closed) Bradford Canal was created in 1744 as part of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, which incorporates the part of the River Aire that flows between Skipton and Leeds. The District boasts 16 miles of this heritage waterway which include the engineering genius of Bingley's five rise locks – – known as one of the 'seven wonders of the waterways', it opened in 1744 and is the steepest lock in the country. Steeton born John Hustler played a pivotal role in the development of the canal which now represents a significant recreational

and quality of life asset attracting residents and visitors alike.

The canal also meant that Bradford could supply first grade iron and steel to other industries and the town became as well known for mechanical engineering as it was for its wool and worsted products - the name of the Low Moor and Bowling Ironworks became known globally by the mid-19th century.

Parks and Moors

The District is home to a fine and extensive collection of public parks, cemeteries and greenspaces, from wild moorlands with literary connections, to traditional urban Victorian parks named after local beneficiaries and historic figures such as Samuel Cunliffe Lister and Robert Peel. Rugged expanses of moorland border the north-west and north-east of the District. In easy reach of our urban centres, our moorlands include Ilkley Moor - with its historic rock carvings and the inspiration for Yorkshire's national anthem "Ilkley Moor Bah't'at"- and the moors above Haworth, synonymous with the lives and works of the Bronte sisters. Our moorlands provide habitats for a wide range of wildlife including the increasingly endangered curlew.

Of our 44 public parks, 10 are on the register of Special Historic Interest including outstanding examples of Victorian green space such as Lister, Roberts and Peel Parks, designed as the lungs of our urban communities and which continue to act as key recreational assets today. The splendour of Lister Park is home to Cartwright Hall Art Gallery while Cliffe Castle Museum stands in the grounds of Keighley's flagship Cliffe Castle Park, a few minutes' walk away from Keighley library – the first Carnegie Library in England. Ilkley's River Side Park is a stone's throw from Ilkley Lido opened in 1935 and still attracting up to 150,00 visitors a year.

Six of our parks have Green Flag status; Lister Park, Roberts Park and most recently, Cliffe Castle have been the subject of successful Heritage Fund bids which have seen them benefit from multi-million pounds worth of investment. St Ives Country Park in Bingley, our largest park, is under consideration for the next bidding round. There is a vision to provide a quality visitor destination and setting for established businesses. The park includes a well maintained collection of historic buildings and landscape that provides recreational and educational opportunities. It is intended that the estate will be financially self-sustaining and support a range good quality jobs.

Cemeteries

There are 24 cemeteries across the Bradford district, many of them dating from the Victorian period. The district's cemeteries are predominately multi-faith and multi-cultural, with some catering for Church of England, Roman Catholic, Muslim, African Caribbean, Jewish, non-conformist and humanist. Of particular historical note is Undercliffe Cemetery. Occupying an elevated 25 acre site with panoramic views across the city, this Grade II listed Cemetery was opened in 1854 by the Bradford Cemetery Company. It is home to the graves of many of the most notable historic Bradfordians, with grand tombs and extravagant mausoleums including 6 listed monuments. Now run by a charitable trust, it also contains over 200 military graves, many from WW1 including the 'Bradford Pals', and is used as a filming location whilst still being an active burial ground.

3. Social heritage

Sporting heritage

The District has a proud sporting heritage. Before World War One, Bradford was known as a sporting centre and a pioneer in the development and commercialisation of sport, helping to define a local identity of 'work hard, play hard'. Cricket, rugby league, football, boxing and cycling have all been important in the heritage of the district. Bradford Cricket Club was one of the leading clubs in Yorkshire; Bradford Football Club was the oldest rugby club in Yorkshire and by 1890 was the wealthiest football club in England. In 1911 the club was the first to win the FA Cup trophy which was designed by Messrs Fattorini of Bradford, as was the first Rugby League World Cup trophy. The stadium at Odsal was at one stage the largest in England after Wembley and still holds the record for attendance for a rugby league match in the northern hemisphere, at 102,000. Following the formation of the Super League in 1996, the Bradford Bulls won three World Club Championships. A large number of cricketers, footballers, wrestlers, boxers and other sports men and women from Bradford District have risen to national and sometimes international fame.

Industrial and business heritage

At the turn of the 19th Century, Bradford was a small rural market town of 16,000 people, where wool spinning and cloth weaving was carried out in local cottages and farms. But by 1841 there were 38 worsted mills in Bradford town and 70 in the borough and it was estimated that two-thirds of the country's wool production was processed in Bradford. Less than ten years later, Bradford had become the wool capital of the world with a population of 100,000 leading to the development of a solid engineering and manufacturing base and a key financial centre which has continued to flourish ever since.

Although textiles have declined during recent years, the local economy has diversified and the area now boasts impressive engineering, printing and packaging, chemical, financial, banking and export industries. High technology and the media industries are also thriving in a city which has moved with the times whilst retaining the skills, quality and innovation on which it has built a world beating reputation. Well-known local businesses that have employed generations of local workers include Morrisons, Hallmark cards, Grattan mail order, Yorkshire Building Society and Yorkshire Water.

Political heritage

Bradford could make more of its radical and pioneering role in generating social change and reform. We are a District and city of campaigns and campaigners, a place of migration and a City of Sanctuary. There are many examples: from Richard Oastler's 19th century campaign to improve industrial working conditions and employment rights inspired by the plight of child labour in Bradford; the 19-week strike in the Manningham Mills, which ended in 1891; the conference at Bradford Labour Institute on Peckover Street in 1893 when Keir Hardie was elected first chair of a new Independent Labour Party; Silsden's Margaret Wintringham was only the second British woman to take a seat in Parliament; Margaret McMillan's campaign for free school meals in the 1890s and Miriam

Lord's trailblazing work in nursery education; to the University of Bradford's creation of the UK's first department of Peace Studies in 1973 and the Bradford 12's resistance to the far right in the 1980s..

The Council's 2020 review of statues and monuments, a response to concerns raised by the murder of George Floyd, global racism and inequality, underlined both the absence of global majority figures in our public realm, and confirmed the District as a stronghold of non-conformist philanthropists, many of whom were abolitionists.

These are just a few aspects of social heritage and just a few of the many people across the District who have achieved great things. We want to celebrate these successes and share all the stories from across the District in new and exciting ways.

"This is a story we want to tell more fully... to bring some of these stories to life and help promote Bradford District as a pioneering and inclusive city on the world stage "

4. Curated public heritage

Bradford Museums and Galleries Service

The Council's service cares for and interprets the District's internationally significant collections. It runs four venues across Bradford District all accredited by Arts Council England. Together they attract 230,000 visits per year. All are located in neighbourhoods with diverse and changing populations.

They are Bolling Hall in West Bowling, one of the oldest buildings in Bradford District, dating from the medieval period; Bradford Industrial Museum in Eccleshill, originally built in 1875 as Moorside Mills, a small worsted spinning mill, which now houses the District's industrial collection, photographic archive and the Bradford Heritage Recording Unit collection of oral history recordings; Cartwright Hall Art Gallery in Manningham, which opened to the public as a purpose-built art gallery and museum during Bradford's Great Exhibition in 1904 and is now one of the UK's leading regional galleries; and Cliffe Castle Museum in Keighley, once the home of Victorian textile industrialist Henry Isaac Butterfield. Today the building is a museum within a public park where visitors can see Victorian rooms and furniture, paintings and decorative art including internationally significant stained glass by Morris and Co, and exhibitions of geology, natural history, archaeology and social history. The District's natural science collections are based here.

Bradford District was one of the first UK local authority museum services to start actively and intentionally collecting works by South Asian and Black artists. Bradford's collection is particularly strong in this area and a platform for future development.

Local Studies and Archives services

Library [Local Studies and Archive collections](#) and the [Bradford branch of the West Yorkshire Archive Service](#) together provide a wonderful opportunity to discover the history of the District and its people. They undertake the important function of collecting, preserving and making available the documentary heritage of the area, including thousands of original documents, books, newspapers, maps, photographs, and oral history recordings. Local Studies special collections relate to the Brontes, Delius, JB Priestley, the Alhambra Theatre, the Jowett Car Club, among many others. The most significant Local Studies collections are in Bradford (Margaret Macmillan Tower in the City Centre), Keighley (Local Studies and Archives at Keighley Library, and Ilkley Library, and there are small local studies collections in each of the District's local libraries, for the areas they serve. Highlights of the Archive collections include the records of trades unions and political parties, local businesses, theatres and notable families.

These resources are vital for local history and family history research, for education, as legal evidence, and for anyone wanting to find out more about where they live and work. The services also provide a range of exhibitions, talks and events throughout the year and work closely with local history societies across the District.

Archaeology and the Historic Environment Record

The [West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service](#) provides two key services: helping to preserve West Yorkshire's heritage (including Bradford Districts'), providing informed and authoritative advice and information to the Planning Authorities in West Yorkshire to help conserve the most significant heritage sites that are affected by development proposals, and maintaining the Historic Environment Record (HER). This is a publicly accessible record of the region's historic environment including information on world heritage sites, scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, cemeteries, battlefields and conservation areas. Collections include extensive historical mapping, aerial photographs, and archaeological reference library.

5. Independent heritage sector

Most of the District's cultural sector is made up of relatively small organisations. 40% of our sector is freelance or self-employed, higher than the national average of 33%. Bradford's heritage sector mirrors this, with major flagship institutions and then a passionate small scale independent sector with few organisations in between.

Some examples include:

[Saltaire World Heritage Education Association](#) (SWHEA), is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It is a partnership between The Salt Foundation (trustees for Victoria Hall, Salt Building and Exhibition Building), [ShIPLEY College](#) (which houses the Saltaire Collection and manages four buildings of significance in Saltaire) and [Saltaire United Reformed Church](#) (providing space for

visiting groups and activities. They exist to promote understanding and appreciation of the industrial heritage of Saltaire.

[The Peace Museum](#) explores the history and the often-untold stories of peace, peacemakers, social reform and peace movements. At the time of publication, the museum is redesigning its exhibitions and displays to enhance its interpretation, improve the way their galleries reflect the diversity of their visitors, and explore the importance of anti-racism as an aspect of peace making. Inclusion and diversity are vitally important to the context of the stories it tells. It is the only museum in the UK dedicated to the history of peace.

Local History Societies such as the [Bradford Historical & Antiquarian Society](#) and the [Keighley & District Local History Society](#) which do great work in researching and publishing about a huge range of local history and heritage topics.

The [Bradford Police Museum](#) is an independent charity. It provides a unique insight into the history and heritage of policing, criminal justice, civic enforcement and the development of crime and punishment in Bradford from the early 19th century. Situated in the original 19th century police station in City Hall, which was operational between 1874 and 1974, it houses exhibits, documents and memorabilia from the inception of the Bradford Borough Police force in the mid-19th century to the present day. Visits include guided tours of the original Victorian cells which formed part of the original police station and the beautifully preserved Victorian court room.

[Ilkley Manor House Museum](#) is run by the Ilkley Manor House Trust with the aim to use this historic building to create a lasting cultural legacy for the town, visitors and the wider region. Dating back to the mid-14th century, it is one of the oldest domestic buildings in West Yorkshire and unusually situated on the site of a Roman fort.

The [Bradford Civic Society](#) champions the District's heritage and built environment, while encouraging higher standards of design and architecture in future developments. It runs a blue plaque scheme, celebrating noteworthy buildings and the people and stories behind them, and a programme of events including exhibitions, talks and guided walks. Its Place Panel is a group of design-led thinkers, established to serve as a critical friend to Bradford Council and developers in relation to place making.

Similarly [Ilkley Civic Society](#) helps preserve, develop, improve and research features of historic or public interest in Ilkley, including running design and conservation awards, a blue plaque scheme, and a local history hub.

There is huge strength, energy and expertise in this indie sector, but it can also be fragmented and some organisations are underpowered and lack sufficient investment.

"Look and see who is not actively involved now and do something about them... It's a multicultural city – harness it, leverage it, transform us"

6. Heritage for everyone

Affection for many of our landmark buildings, inspirational landscapes and many parks defy barriers of age, class and ethnicity - but we also know that we need to do much more to engage everyone.

Only half (51%) of respondents agree that culture in Bradford ‘represents me and my life’—Even lower for under 19s (36%)—Less than half (45%) agree that they are satisfied with the range of cultural activities in the District and only 42% with provision near to where they live—Much lower for under 19s (27% and 21%)

The District's greatest strength is its people. We're the youngest city in the UK and among its most diverse. Almost 23% of the population are aged 16 or under, over 150 languages are spoken here and at the 2021 census almost 44% were from non-white British backgrounds including people of South Asian, Eastern European, African, Caribbean or Arab heritage, amongst many others. The District represents a unique fusion of Yorkshire heritage and global influences and we are determined to harness the power of our youth and diversity. Building skills and opportunity for our youthful population to tell their own stories and explore their places within the District's wider history and heritage will be essential to giving our heritage its radical redefinition and building its future strength and resilience.

For a lot of people across Bradford District, their story isn't told prominently enough. The stories that we tell and pass down across the generations are less well understood as being "heritage" but it is exactly these stories that shape our past, present and future. And there are many stories still to tell. There is no one "Bradford Story" – just as the District is home to many places, towns and villages and many communities - there are many stories. Our communities are full of stories, some of which are lived privately, many of which are told publicly. But they need a coherence and context, and we need to think about whose stories we tell, whose heritage we explore, and who tells those stories. We need to build skills and capacity for people to tell their own stories, explore their places within the District's wider history and heritage; and we need to find ways to illuminate our heritage in ways that are contemporarily relevant.

This work has already started and people's stories are being collected through the Council's oral history archives and the work of a range of organisations across the District:

[Bradford Community Broadcasting](#) lets local people play a role in their District by giving them a voice in the media.

[Bradford for Everyone's People Library](#) is a collection of 'human books' showcasing 'inspiring stories from people born and bred or newly arrived and who live in all parts of our wonderful District.'

The [Bradford Stories Festival Living Library](#) presents real people as “books”, allowing young people to meet inspiring role models, from Ambreen Sadiq, one of the first female Asian Muslim boxers, to Dr Geetha Upadhyaya, the founder of Kala Sangam.

A number of networks, such as Bradford's African and Caribbean Heritage Network and the [African and Caribbean Achievement Project](#), not necessarily based in a public building or venue, work to collect, preserve and tell the stories of particular communities and their role in Bradford's past and contemporary heritage in partnership with Bradford District Museums and Galleries, Libraries and Archives.

This work will provide a great starting point for creating a more comprehensive and coherent 'People's Stories' project as part of our Plan.

7. Strategic context

Culture Is Our Plan

The District's cultural strategy from 2021 – 2031 has been adopted by Bradford Council and has ten targets all of which this action plan will address and support:

- Give every primary age child in the District the opportunity to learn the District's story through co-creation of a Bradford Curriculum
- Increase the number, range, scale and ambition of arts, culture and heritage activity and partnerships, creating 3,000 jobs in the District and increasing visitor numbers and spend
- Realise capital projects that will rehouse, reimagine and repurpose the District's cultural and heritage assets
- Level up national investment per capita to comparable places
- Adopt the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals to measure our success not only in carbon reduction but also in equalities, decent jobs, good education, wellbeing and reducing poverty
- Regularly engage 70% of people in the District in arts, culture and heritage activities
- Give 250,000 people in the District's most deprived wards the opportunity to get involved with arts, culture and heritage activities
- Ensure that 70% of people will be 'satisfied with the range of cultural activities in the District and near to where they live' (50% in 2021) and that 80% of people will feel culture in Bradford 'represents me and my life' (50% in 2021)
- Draw 50% of Bradford's creative workforce, audiences and cultural leadership from people currently underrepresented in the culture and creative industries sector
- Create a calendar of high-quality festivals and events with local, national and international significance, with a view to Bradford District being designated UK City of Culture 2025

Bradford UK City of Culture 2025 (BD25)

Designation of Bradford as the UK City of Culture 2025 makes possible the realisation of bold ambitions for our heritage and heritage sector that would otherwise not happen. This includes the heritage right across our District – in every ward, and involving our museums, collections, historic buildings and infrastructure, people and their stories, and the way our stunning landscapes and natural environment have shaped our history.

BD25's programme themes are rooted in the unique heritage, landscape and character of our District, but they speak to universal concerns that will connect BD25 to all corners of the UK and beyond. They are inspired by the stories, journeys and origins of our population, who stand on the shoulders of the migrants who powered our mills and today drive our high-tech international trade. Our diverse heritage will allow us space to explore the future of cultural, social and economic exchanges nationally and internationally.

Bradford's City of Culture 2025 project consists of three distinct phases: the runway period (late 2022-2024), the year itself, and time in 2026 to embed the legacy. Actions in this plan are key to all three phases.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (spanning Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield) has produced a Culture, Heritage and Sport framework, following public consultation in autumn 2022. This is a plan to grow culture, heritage and sport in the region, founded on two beliefs: that culture, heritage and sport matter - they are threaded through our lives, give us reasons to live and work in a place, and foster local pride and coherence. The stories we tell shape the way we see ourselves, the way we see the world, and how the world sees us; and that culture, heritage and sport have huge potential as levers to level up West Yorkshire. They can create jobs and growth, and attract investment. They can inspire us to succeed. They can be the medicine that improves our mental and physical wellbeing.

With the full commitment of West Yorkshire Mayor, Tracy Brabin, the framework has four themes: People (everyone in West Yorkshire can enjoy, culture, heritage and sport); Place (West Yorkshire is a creative, sustainable and vibrant region with culture, heritage and sport at its heart); skills (you can build a great career in culture, heritage and sport in West Yorkshire); and Business (West Yorkshire is the place to grow your creative business).

The framework's actions will be investment, collaboration across the five authorities, and brokerage - leveraging funds or policy interventions from government, and attracting businesses to invest in the region.

National Lottery Heritage Fund (the Heritage Fund)

Heritage can be anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations

The Heritage Fund has a very positive relationship with the District and recognises the need to work closely with us to develop better and bolder bids. It made two awards to Bradford District worth £16,800 in 2019. In the same 12 months Sheffield won eight awards worth £684,900, Liverpool 19 awards worth £893,000 and Leeds ten awards worth £341,100.

Culture is our Plan and the actions in this plan will address the Heritage Fund's ambition to put heritage at the heart of place making and ensure more people will be involved in heritage and will deliver the fund's objectives and outcomes:

- inclusion: 'a wider range of people will be involved in heritage'
- economy including job creation: 'the local economy will be boosted'
- wellbeing: 'people will have greater wellbeing'
- local areas: 'the local area will be a better place to live, work and visit'
- skills: 'people will have developed skills'
- organisational resilience: 'funded organisations will be more resilient'

The Heritage Fund will also make a major contribution to the UK City of Culture programme which represents a game-changing opportunity for heritage in the District.

Historic England

The historic environment makes a significant contribution to the distinctive character of Bradford District, to its economic well-being, and to the quality of life of its communities. Bradford is a place with great heritage-based opportunities, but also where the gap in terms of the ability to deliver heritage-based projects is also great for a variety of reasons.

Conversations are under way between Bradford Council, BD25 and Historic England about support for the development of heritage in the District up to, during and beyond 2025. These conversations are focusing on how the city centre Conservation Areas and key landmark buildings such as City Hall can play their part in celebrating the heritage and enabling the city centre to thrive. The Kirkgate Townscape Heritage Scheme and the Bradford City Village developments can transform the historic heart of the city centre and provide a basis to better connect the city to the rest of the Bradford District.

Co-creation is key to everything Historic England funds and commissions. The High Street Heritage Action Zone Cultural Programme runs a series of national commissions, linking schemes across England. One such commission is Picturing High Streets touring exhibition in which Impressions Gallery is a partner. Historic England also run a youth-led programme exploring how young people can understand, mark and celebrate the places where history happened. Known as the Place Marker pilot, Mind the Gap with People Powered Press and Ignite Yorkshire have received grant funding to deliver projects. The Everyday Heritage grants programme, which celebrates working class heritage, has grant funded a project relating to Fountains of Tales set in the Oastler market with History in Action CIC.

Historic England also identifies The District's historic mills as one of the catalysts for growth. Bradford District has some 245,000sqm of redundant floor space in mills, which could be used to create 2,900 new homes or leisure, employment or community spaces.

Bradford's diverse population

While Bradford District does relatively well in regard to equality and inclusion compared to England averages, there is still much to do and huge opportunity in our rapidly diversifying District:

- Despite our young population, currently only 2% of the local cultural workforce are aged 16–24, compared with 7% nationally.
- While the sector workforce is more diverse than the population of England and of the cultural and creative industries nationally, only 10% is of south Asian Heritage compared with 27% of the District's population.
- 55% of the District's population are classed in less economically advantaged groups, compared with just 25% of the cultural sector workforce.
- People with disabilities that "affect their day-to-day activities a lot" are under-represented in the workforce (2% compared with 8% of the local population).

- For the boards that govern cultural activity in the District, 50–64-year-olds are significantly over-represented compared with the population of the District.
- 23% of board membership has diverse heritage compared with 33% of the population.
- Males make up 49% of the District's population but 58% of board membership.

8. What we will do

#1 BD25

We will ensure heritage is at heart of BD25. A City of Culture programme makes possible the realisation of our bold ambitions.

We will ensure that significant investment by National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England is made strategically to respond to this action plan, raise the profile of heritage in the District and build legacy for heritage across the District.

The programme will be people-focused, helping people make links between their lives, civic life and culture; be District-wide, and have place making at its heart.

As we deliver this heritage action plan towards 2025 and beyond, people in underserved communities must be empowered to show how their personal and community stories have and can further shape our civic life, local pride and national and international image.

The artistic programme of BD2025 will contribute to the regeneration and reimagining of under-used historic buildings and locations, and to imaginative uses of our landscapes that will inspire Bradford people and visitors for years to come. We will partner with many organisations, including those who promote and manage our rural landscapes, such as the Canal and River Trust, to create stunning events for our programme and support the heritage development work of Bradford Council across the District, urban and rural.

#2 Bradford Museums and Galleries

Bradford's Museums and Galleries service has created a new [Strategy 2022 - 2023](#) with six core strategic priorities:

- To build a distinctive sense of place in Bradford District, based on our diverse heritage and culture.
- To promote physical and mental health and wellbeing among all our communities
- To enable everyone to learn, develop skills, build confidence, and understand their place in the world.
- To support Climate Emergency awareness, action and sustainable growth principles throughout everything we do.
- To support a strong economy through Bradford District by developing people's skills, diversifying our workforce, working efficiently, and diversifying our income sources.
- To work in partnership to ensure that everyone in Bradford District has access to ambitious, world class art, heritage and cultural experiences.

On the back of this work Bradford Museums and Galleries have secured £1,145,310 for 3 years (£381,770 per annum) of new Arts Council England investment and will become part of the Arts Council's National Portfolio from April 2023.

As the Museums deliver on their strategy, they will be key partners and venues for the heritage sector and for BD25 as we work to deliver *Culture is our Plan* and increase investment in heritage, create new activity, tell our stories and build heritage skills across the District.

#3 Local Studies and Archives, Bradford's stories and City Hall

Our iconic Grade 1-listed City Hall is one of the most significant historic buildings in the District but most people seldom, if ever, go inside, or experience the wonderful architecture and collections it holds. Yet the glorious civic spaces around City Hall – Centenary Square and City Park - are gathering places for families, young people, who feel a significant ownership of these spaces. Our recent artist residencies in 2022 found a deep affection and respect for the building, and a yearning to be able to “get inside it more”.

We will deliver a significant engagement programme to develop a clear plan for the redevelopment of City Hall that leaves a legacy driven by the stories of the people of Bradford. It will inform the transformation of our City Hall into a heritage attraction in its own right, more accessible to the people of Bradford, more representative of them, and informative and attractive to visitors.

It could become the home of a project telling Bradford's stories in a *People's Stories* project, the central focus of which would be to capture and tell “untold” stories, share our history and the diversity of our cultural heritage with pride. To celebrate migration and diversity, to speak honestly and openly, to resist racism and challenge all forms of discrimination and to create a safe civic space in which to have difficult conversations when needed – giving confidence to our communities, celebrating difference, bringing people together, boosting pride and promoting mental and physical wellbeing.

Our stories should be told in visual, compelling and interactive ways using multimedia technology and drawing on extraordinary skills such as the digital archaeology team at Bradford University, and drawing on the rich collections in archives, museums and local studies collections across Bradford, as well as building on our involvement with the exciting national [Story Trails](#) project using AR and VR technologies to tell hidden local stories.

This could strengthen the connection between the Bradford's local studies and archive collections and the people of Bradford District. One possibility for further consideration is the relocation of the central library into the City Hall; another is the inclusion of all District libraries as local studies hubs where residents and visitors can learn about and even add to the stories of the District through digital technology.

People's Stories would take inspiration from the world's greatest museums of migration and will be dynamically set in a building where modern migrants come to officially have their citizenship recognised and celebrated.

A major future capital project centred on City Hall, arising from our engagement programme, to make City Hall more accessible to people from across the Bradford District and visitors should be co-created with them as part of BD25, and its delivery would be one of the year's most exciting legacies. It would also be a major contributor to the visitor economy.

#4 Regeneration

Among the many regeneration opportunities the District is exploring, we will make celebrating our built heritage a theme in helping develop a vibrant future for our communities, and create a high-quality, attractive environment for people to live, work, and visit, which will benefit the District as a whole.

Building on the work already being delivered through the Bradford City Centre Townscape Heritage Scheme and in the new Darley Street Market Project, regeneration strategies such as City Village and Transforming Cities, will also recognise the buildings and places that helped shape our landscape and built environment, and find sustainable uses for these important assets.

Opportunities will be explored for how regeneration funding, such as Shipley and Keighley Towns Fund, can contribute to the conservation and restoration of historic buildings and streetscapes.

We will partner with the Henry Moore Institute to explore ways in which we may be able to celebrate the 20th century sculptor William Mitchell. Our District is home to several of his remarkable concrete sculptures including iconic murals in the Kirkgate Market Hall, in the former Bradford and Bingley HQ and the Grade II-listed "Story of Wool" mural in Ilkley.

#5 Supporting the independent sector

Our conversations with the heritage sector told us that the sector has many strengths, but it isn't well connected, some organisations are underpowered and underinvested in, and there's a hunger for opportunity for more skills development.

Following the creation of *Culture is our Plan*, Bradford Council has made the District's heritage organisations eligible for support through its cultural sector grants programmes for both multi-annual revenue and one-off project funding.

We will develop a robust programme to support skills development and facilitate better networking and peer-learning, both within the heritage sector, and between heritage and cultural sector individuals and organisations, now and into the future. The Bradford Cultural Voice Forum is a free-to-join representative network for culture in the District which many heritage professionals and organisations have joined. To help the sector to work better together and increase its capacity to play a full role in Bradford 2025 and beyond, Bradford Council will work with relevant partners, including BD25 and Cultural Voice Forum, to create, resource and locate a Heritage Development Officer role from 2023 - 2025.

The Officer will facilitate the delivery of this Heritage Action Plan through connecting the various elements of it, providing resources and steer for the development of heritage projects and developing capacity within the community for the delivery of heritage projects. This will empower the next generations to tell their stories, connect to their heritage and celebrate heritage in a contemporary context.

#6 Grassroots heritage

We know that many people do not recognise the word "heritage" as something relevant to them even though a love of the past through family history or background is really important to them. Developing a radically different definition of heritage will mean encouraging people from all communities and corners of the District to engage and providing platforms and access to funds to enable them to celebrate their past and pass on to future generations.

By the end of June 2023 Bradford Council, the Heritage Fund and The Leap will complete and report on a District-wide pilot to do exactly this and we will follow-through on its learnings and recommendations. The Leap is Bradford's Arts Council England Creative People and Places programme and its mission is to change the nature of arts and culture from top-down to community-led. Its purpose is to support people and artists in Bradford & Keighley to shape and lead the arts and cultural offer in our District.

#7 The Bradford curriculum

The Bradford Cultural Education Partnership brings the arts, culture, heritage, creative industries and education sectors together to offer a consistent and high-quality art and cultural education for all children and young people and will lead the co-creation process to develop The Bradford Curriculum.

The Bradford Curriculum will ensure children and young people across the District have the chance to learn about and understand Bradford's heritage. This will include digital storytelling initiatives where children and young people learn Bradford's stories and capture and share their own new narratives. It will support educators, families and young people to access information about the District's heritage offer and associated career development opportunities.

The work in primary schools builds on Historic England's Heritage Schools activity and the excellent work already undertaken at Feversham and Peel Park Primary.

#8 Landmarks, people and places

Building on the report by the [Bradford Monuments Review](#) and drawing on the learning and stories emerging through other actions in this plan, we will collaborate with BD25 to lead a high-profile programme of new place-markers and monuments across the District. We will develop Local Lists to enable communities to have formal recognition of what they value from the past in their neighbourhoods through public nomination processes to recognise the contributions of all communities to the past and future success in a District-wide celebration across all wards.

A core part of this will be addressing the absence of Black and those of other global majority heritage in monuments and statues throughout the city, and celebrating the role of women, migrants, working class people, disabled people, and groups with other hidden histories such as travellers, the LGBT community, and the diverse faith groups, in shaping Bradford.

#9 The mills

The regeneration of Salts Mill and Manningham Mills are great success stories for Bradford, with the Mills are Alive light show being a huge success in 2022.

Historic England confirms that we have 249 textile-manufacturing sites in the District with a total floor space of approximately 1,233,745 square metres. Activating these spaces sits at the heart of the emerging BD25 programme with ambition to reuse and reanimate our built industrial heritage with amazing cultural interventions. This will also serve to inspire the long-term regeneration of these extraordinary local assets, providing a sense of identity and belonging and making an important contribution to our collective health and wellbeing as well as to our climate emergency agenda.

#10 Place making and visitor economy

Heritage is a vital part of our visitor economy offer and local distinctiveness will be placed at the centre of place making within Bradford District and will be a priority for Bradford Council's planning and master planning work with Historic England and others.

Our new Place Marketing Partnership brings together business leaders, key regional organisations and Bradford Council to set the vision and guide the marketing of the District as a place to work, live, invest, visit, study and play. It will oversee and support the work of the place marketing team and the delivery of the place marketing and investment plan, to promote investment in the District locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

The Partnership is the Place Marketing and Investment Advisory Board in the District, governed by the Health and Wellbeing Board which leads the linked strategic partnerships through which we will deliver the five outcomes of the Bradford District Plan.

This work will include the feasibility for a co-creation with local communities of a network of sustainable heritage trails around the District for cycling and walking using old railway lines and route ways, and interpreted routes around urban neighbourhoods to highlight local history. This will improve understanding of our heritage, increase footfall to local businesses, improve health and well-being and give us a green-tourism advantage.

We already invest in and support significant heritage development led by prominent local organisations:

Bradford Live

An exciting transformation is underway to breathe life back into an iconic Bradford landmark.

Located in the heart of the city and originally built in 1930, the magnificent art deco building formerly known as the Bradford Odeon is being restored, brought back to its former glory as an entertainment hub for the District.

Inspired by a grassroots movement to save the building and supported by £4m from the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, from the Northern

Cultural Regeneration fund and in £959,500 from the Heritage Fund, the development is managed by the Bradford Live trust and the NEC Group (UK's leading live events business). When open it is expected to attract 300,000 visitors each year to a calendar of 200+ world class music, comedy and family entertainment events in an extraordinary heritage setting.

National Science and Media Museum Sound and Vision

Sound and Vision is a £6million project, with support from the Heritage Fund, which will build two significant new galleries at the National Science and Media Museum. The galleries, accompanied by a programme of activities, will showcase key objects and stories from the museum's world-class collections of photography, film, television, animation, videogames and sound technologies.

The new galleries will transform the heart of the museum, remodelling two floors of the building, opening up unused spaces and reimagining the display and interpretation of the core collections in time for BD25. The ground floor of the museum will also be opened up and reconfigured, creating a new public space and an enhanced visitor welcome. An additional lift and the renovation of the existing lift will increase accessibility and enable all visitors to move around the building with ease. The displays and interpretation will be informed by close consultation with local communities to ensure the museum's relevance to visitors and engage underrepresented audiences. A vibrant activity plan sits alongside the development of the new galleries. It supports greater access, new employment and volunteering opportunities and is focused on enabling more people – irrespective of class, race, age, ability, gender or faith – to engage with the museum.

Heritage Actions	Delivering Heritage Fund Objectives	Meeting <i>Culture is our Plan</i> ambitions
#1 BD25	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; the local economy will be boosted	Bradford will know itself better; having fun; bringing the community together; heritage thrives in every corner of the District; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; thinking big.
#2 Bradford Museums and Galleries	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; Bradford will be a better place to live, work and visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; more people will have learned about heritage/change in ideas	Bradford will know itself better; having fun; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story.
#3 City Hall and Bradford's stories	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; the local economy will be boosted	Bradford will know itself better; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story; thinking big.
#4 Regeneration	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; Bradford will be a better place to live, work and visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; more people will have learned about heritage/change in ideas; the local economy will be boosted.	Bradford will know itself better; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; thinking big; Live life better; thinking big.

<p>#5 Supporting the independent sector</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; people will have developed skills; organisations will be more resilient.</p>	<p>Bradford will know itself better; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; network capacity.</p>
<p>#6 Grassroots heritage</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; heritage will be identified and better explained.</p>	<p>Bradford will know itself better; having fun; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story; heritage thrives in every corner of the District.</p>
<p>#7 Bradford curriculum</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; more people will have learned about heritage/change in ideas.</p>	<p>Bradford will know itself better; having fun; bringing the community together; heritage thrives in every corner of the District; making the most of who we are; network capacity; we will tell our own story.</p>
<p>#8 Landmarks, people and places</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; more people will have learned about heritage/change in ideas.</p>	<p>Bradford will know itself better; having fun; bringing the community together; heritage thrives in every corner of the District; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story.</p>

<p>#9 The mills</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; the local economy will be boosted.</p>	<p>Bradford will know itself better; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story; thinking big; having fun.</p>
<p>#10 Place making and visitor economy</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; the local economy will be boosted.</p>	<p>Bradford will know itself better; bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story; thinking big; having fun; heritage thrives in every corner of the District.</p>
<p>Bradford Live</p>	<p>People will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; the local economy will be boosted.</p>	<p>Bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; thinking big; having fun.</p>
<p>National Science and Media Museum – Sound and Vision</p>	<p>A wider range of people will be involved in heritage; people will have greater wellbeing; Bradford will be a better place to live work or visit; heritage will be identified and better explained; the local economy will be boosted.</p>	<p>Bringing the community together; making the most of what we have; making the most of who we are; we will tell our own story; thinking big; having fun.</p>

Thank you

The Bradford Cultural Place Partnership commissioned the Heritage Action Plan with funds from Bradford Council and The Heritage Fund. The Partnership is chaired by Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe and membership includes leaders of the major strategic cultural initiatives in the District alongside representative of the independent arts, culture and heritage sector:

- University of Bradford
- Bradford College
- The Creative People and Places programme, The Leap, led by Bradford Institute for Health Research
- Bradford Producing Hub
- Bradford Cultural Education Partnership
- Arts Council England
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Historic England
- Screen Yorkshire
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Bradford 2025

We would like to express our thanks to the thousands of people who took part in the original development of *Culture is our Plan* and to those organisations and individuals who gave yet further time and energy to the development of this action plan:

Amal; Black Dyke Mills Heritage Venue; Bradford 2025 Bid; Bradford's African Caribbean Heritage Network; Bradford Antiquarian Society; Bradford Cathedral; Bradford Civic Society; Bradford Council Landscape, Design and Conservation Team; Bradford Council Libraries and Archives and Christine May; Bradford Cultural Voice Forum; Bradford Museums and Galleries and Rosie Crook, Elizabeth Llandres and James Steward; Bradford Playhouse; Bradford Police Museum; Bradford Producing Hub; Bradford South Asian History Month; Bradford Statues and Monuments Review; Bradford University; The Brick Box; Canal and River Trust; Charles Dacres; Harry Jelley; Historic England; Ilkley Manor House; Inspired Neighbourhoods; Kala Sangam; Keighley and Worth Valley Railway; Kitty Wright; The Leap and Zulf Ahmed; LGBT+ history month/Older and Wilders Equity Partnership; Mark Dobson; National Science and Media Museum; The Peace Museum; Rosie Freeman; Saltaire History Club; Saltaire World Heritage Association for the Saltaire Collection; Shiraaz Ali; Si Cunningham; South Square Centre and Yvonne Carmichael; St George's Hall and Penny Green; Undercliffe Cemetery Charity; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford; and Heritage Lincolnshire, with special thanks to Alice Ullathorne.