

Culture and The Arts

Vision: Experiencing a sense of place and enhanced quality of life through participating in a vibrant and creative community.

1. Background

Council is an advocate for culture, supporting and empowering community groups in the delivery of quality cultural programs across Port Stephens. Council’s cultural development program is delivered in partnership with the community and government agencies.

Cultural planning considers the increased and diverse benefits that a community’s cultural life brings to the economy, society and environment. Cultural planning provides strategic direction to Council, community and the private sector in heritage, the arts, cultural tourism and indigenous cultures.

2. Priority Directions

The main priorities identified through the Futures Forum and community / agency workshops are:

- A collaborative cultural sector
- Communities engaged in cultural life
- Employment opportunities through cultural tourism & creative industries
- Place-making: creating a sense of place & local identity
- Venues to access & deliver the arts

3. Addressing State Plan priorities

- E8 More people using parks, sporting fields and recreation facilities; and participating in the arts and cultural activity
- R4 Increased participation and integration in community activity
- P1 Increased business investment
- P2 Maintain and invest in infrastructure
- P4 More people participating in education and training throughout their life
- P7 Better access to training in rural and regional NSW to support local economies

4. Links to other themes

- Tourism / economy
- Built environment / character
- Education / training
- Community spirit
- Youth voice

5. Actions

The futures forum and community / agency workshops identified actions to address the key issues. Table X shows these actions and offers suggestions as to when these actions might come to fruition and by whom. Public submissions received on the draft Cultural Plan were also taken into consideration.

Table X: Identified priorities for Culture and the Arts.

Timeframes: Short Term = 1-4 years; Medium Term = 4-12 years; Long term = 12+ years

Direction	Strategies	When	Council	Stakeholders
A collaborative cultural sector	The adopted Port Stephens Cultural Plan is a community partnership, outlining the roles of organisations in delivering identified cultural priorities.	Short term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural groups • Community groups • Gov agencies
	‘Culture Port Stephens’: A cultural network, with representation from organisations interested in culture and the arts, is established as a committee of Council to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner in the delivery of identified cultural priorities – as outlined in the Port Stephens Cultural Plan; • Advise Council on cultural matters; • Assist with strategic / facility planning; • Provide a mechanism for community engagement; • Provide training for members; • Facilitate communications between cultural organisations; • Promote opportunities for the broader community to be involved; & • Advocate to all levels of Government on cultural matters. 	Short term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural groups • Community groups • Gov agencies

	Working groups coordinate the efforts of various organisations in addressing identified cultural priorities – as required. <i>(The Arts Councils operate as part of the Culture Port Stephens Network.)</i>	Short term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups Gov agencies
	An 'Event Planners Network' (EPN) is established to maximise opportunities for cross-promotion and resource sharing. <i>(The EPN operates as part of the Culture Port Stephens Network.)</i>	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event organisers Entertainers Venues / vendors Tourism industry
	The annual 'Cultural Projects Fund' assists non-profit community organisations to deliver projects addressing the cultural priorities.	Annual	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
Communities engaged in cultural life	Broad awareness of opportunities to be involved in cultural events and programs through marketing such as a calendar, website, email bulletins, cross-promotion.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
	Community spirit expressed and celebrated through cultural programs and events.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
	The arts are recognised and utilised as a medium for influencing people's lifestyles. EG: sustainability, health promotion, safety, etc.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups Gov agencies
	People of all ages and abilities have opportunities for creative expression.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
	Cultural awareness and harmony is strengthened, between Aboriginal people and the broader community. EG: NAIDOC week.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Land Councils Community groups
	Cultural awareness and harmony is strengthened, between culturally / linguistically diverse people and the broader community.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community groups Multicultural groups
	The Port Stephens community values, recognises and celebrates its cultural diversity.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
Employment opportunities through cultural tourism & creative industries	Community/cultural festivals and events are linked with tourism and economic development partners.	Short term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism industry Cultural groups
	Cafes, restaurants and clubs are developed as exhibition and performance spaces.	Short term	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business sector
	Public spaces are designed to support cultural activity such as events and busking.	Short term	Lead	
	Heritage and cultural walk/drive trails are implemented, including travel-guides and interpretive signage at key sites.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage groups
	Aboriginal cultural tourism developed, including supporting development of the 'Murrook Centre'.	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal Land Councils Community groups
	Professional practices of aspiring artists are developed through improved access to training. Achieved through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training pathways established and promoted Expanded TAFE facilities & programs Practitioners with established careers in creative industries are showcased and engaged in mentoring programs 	Medium Term	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Training Organisations Schools Gov agencies Creative professionals
	Opportunities for artists to exhibit and perform through development of cultural infrastructure and events.	Medium Term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
Place-making: Creating a sense of place & local identity	Arts Councils coordinate delivery of place-based strategies in each locality and feed into the LGA wide cultural planning processes. <i>(The Arts Councils operate as part of the Culture Port Stephens Network.)</i>	Short term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
	Public art and mural projects are delivered; engage the community and reflect the significance of the sites.	Short Term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
	'Signature' events are developed for/by each community, which reflects their cultural identity and community values.	Short term	Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
	Built environments are designed to reflect cultural identity and community values of each distinct locality.	Short Term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural groups Community groups
Venues to access & deliver the arts	Existing and potential cultural spaces are identified and adapted to meet current and future needs.	Short Term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gov agencies
	Equitable access to cultural infrastructure, catering for the cultural life of communities across the Port Stephens LGA – with provisions for the visual arts, performing arts and libraries.	Medium Term	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gov agencies Cultural groups Community groups
	Council and community gallery spaces are established as a 'Port Stephens Art Gallery Network' (AGN), to maximise opportunities for cross-promotion and public access to local exhibitions. <i>(The AGN operates as part of the Culture Port Stephens Network.)</i>	Short term	Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gallery operators Visual artists Tourism industry