



COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Dumfries and Galloway Cultural Partnership (DGCP) is a region wide collaboration working to bring together people, organisations, and ideas from across the arts, heritage, and creative sectors. This communications plan outlines how we will raise awareness of the DGCP, invite people to join the partnership, and build meaningful engagement across Dumfries and Galloway.



Who We Are

The DGCP is not a new organisation, but a partnership made up of four founding members:

- **Dumfries and Galloway Council**
- **DG Unlimited**
- **Dumfries and Galloway Museums and Heritage Network**
- **South of Scotland Enterprise**

We are a connector and amplifier helping people, projects, and places work better together across the cultural landscape.



Why This Matters

Culture and heritage play a vital role in our region's identity, economy, education, health, and wellbeing. The DGCP exists to help deliver the ambitions of the Dumfries and Galloway Cultural Strategy (2021 to 2031), by creating more joined up working, stronger partnerships, and fairer opportunities across the region.

What This Plan Covers

This plan sets out:

- Our key messages and the vision we are communicating
- The audiences we want to reach
- How we will invite people to join and take part in the partnership
- Clear information on themes, values and how to get involved

Our Call to Action

We are currently in an exciting period of development. Our structure and priorities are in place and now we are reaching out across the region to invite others in.

Whether you are an artist, educator, volunteer, venue manager, policymaker, or someone passionate about local culture:

We want to hear from you.
Join the partnership.
Let's take action together.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Join the Partnership

The DGCP is open to anyone who values culture in our region (artists, educators, heritage workers, volunteers, freelancers, and more) and invites you to help shape a shared cultural future.

Our Vision

We want to see a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable cultural ecosystem that reflects the people of Dumfries and Galloway and contributes to wellbeing, identity and the local economy.

Bring the Strategy to Life

The DGCP exists to help deliver the Dumfries and Galloway Cultural Strategy by connecting people, encouraging collaboration, and ensuring culture is central to regional planning and investment.

Explore Themes That Matter

We have several focuses that aim to create open spaces where you can explore ideas, connect with others, and shape how culture supports health, education, place making, and more.

Celebrate What's Working

We want to highlight and support the brilliant creative work already happening in Dumfries and Galloway and show how much culture matters in every community.

Connect with Others

The DGCP wants to help build stronger connections across arts, heritage, education, health, tourism, and communities to reduce isolation, share ideas, and create meaningful partnerships.

Be Heard and Represented

We are committed to fairness, inclusivity, and representation, especially for people whose voices haven't always been heard in decision making about culture.



LETS TAKE ACTION TOGETHER

The Cultural Partnership is a collaborative force working to bring together the arts and heritage sectors in Dumfries and Galloway to create long term, positive change. We are a connector and amplifier.

Our vision is simple: a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable cultural ecosystem that reflects and serves the people of Dumfries and Galloway, from major organisations to grassroots creatives and local communities.

We intend that by 2030 our region's distinctive creativity, culture, and heritage will have an international profile and be renowned for its contribution to the region's economy and quality of life.

The DGCP exists to help make the Dumfries and Galloway Cultural Strategy real. By working together, we can ensure that culture is recognised and supported as essential to the region's wellbeing, identity, and economy. Culture and heritage is not just an add on, it is vital to how Dumfries and Galloway grows, invests and supports its people.

We are currently in an exciting period of development. Having established our structure and priorities, we are now inviting people to join the partnership.

The DGCP will make it easier to meet people across arts, heritage, education, health, tourism, and community sectors. We want to reduce isolation, share ideas and opportunities and build strong relationships across the region.

The DGCP is an opportunity to engage the third, private and public sectors all in one space.

There is already brilliant cultural work happening in every corner of Dumfries and Galloway. The DGCP will help share these successes and celebrate the value of culture in every community.

We are committed to fairness, inclusivity, and representation. Our Fair Work principles are rooted in equity and collaboration. We are actively seeking a broad range of voices, especially those who have been underrepresented in decision making: including young people, New Scots, disabled and neurodivergent people, LGBTQIA+ individuals and others. You do not need to be part of an organisation to take part.

We want to hear from you. Whether you are an artist, heritage professional, educator, volunteer, business or venue manager, or someone who simply cares about culture locally, your voice belongs in the room.



WHO ARE THE DGCP?



Who we are:

The Dumfries and Galloway Cultural Partnership (DGCP) is a region wide collaboration that brings together key cultural organisations to work towards a shared vision for culture across Dumfries and Galloway. The region is home to multiple cultural and heritage organisations, from museums and galleries to local festivals and creative collectives, who could all benefit from greater connection and visibility through this work.

We are not a formal organisation; we are a regional partnership, made up of four strategic founding members:

- **Dumfries and Galloway Council**
- **DG Unlimited**
- **Dumfries and Galloway Museums and Heritage Network**
- **South of Scotland Enterprise**

The DGCP works as a connector and amplifier, helping people, communities and projects work better together across the arts, heritage, and creative sectors. Dumfries and Galloway's creative economy comprises over 1,150 enterprises working with almost 2,700 people, many of whom are freelancers, small business owners or volunteers and are based in rural areas, often working in isolation.

The Partnership's role is to open up more opportunities for collaboration and shared learning across sectors like health, tourism, education, and community development. The region's cultural assets span a wide geography, from Langholm in the East to Portpatrick in the West, Gretna in the South to Moffat in the North. The region is made up of coast, farmland, forests and small rural settlements, it spans over 110 miles from East to West, and 60 North to South, making coordination and cross-region planning especially important.

It exists to strengthen relationships across the region, support innovation, and increase the visibility and demonstrate impact of creative work. It ensures that culture and heritage are part of regional planning and investment and that the voices of local people and organisations are heard.

How You Can Connect:

- Sign up to join the partnership
- Follow our four partners on social media
- Attend workshops, networking events, and future meetings
- Look out for new opportunities to get involved

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our People

We want Dumfries and Galloway to be known for community led cultural activity where people of all ages, backgrounds and identities can access creativity, culture and heritage to support their learning, wellbeing, and quality of life.

- We aim to bring together arts, heritage and creative organisations to work more closely and effectively.
- We aim to support better working conditions and career opportunities for people in the creative and heritage sectors.
- We are committed to making sure a wide range of voices help shape the region's cultural future including freelancers, early career artists, young people, volunteers, New Scots, disabled and neurodivergent people, LGBTQIA+ individuals and others.

Our Places

We believe that every town, village, and rural community in Dumfries and Galloway has its own stories to tell. Culture and heritage can help shape and transform the places we live.

- Dumfries and Galloway is home to over 300 heritage and creative organisations, venues and sites. We want to celebrate and invest in our region's natural, built and living heritage by making sure it is accessible, visible and valued by all.
- We aim to strengthen connections between culture and other parts of daily life, including education, health, tourism, and local development, so that communities benefit from more joined-up approaches.
- Arts participation has been shown to boost confidence, wellbeing, and attainment. We want to help change that by supporting more schools, services and communities to work with artists, heritage workers and creative projects.
- Culture has a unique role to play in helping people feel more connected to where they live. We believe that by investing in culture locally, we can reduce isolation, improve wellbeing and help communities across Dumfries and Galloway thrive.

The Difference We Make

By supporting arts and heritage, we can build a stronger and more resilient Dumfries and Galloway. We can become a region where creativity is part of how we grow, care for each other and look to the future.

- The cultural sector contributes over £100 million to the regional economy and supports over 2,600 people. We want to champion the value of culture in every part of regional life: socially, emotionally and economically.
- We aim to raise the profile of Dumfries and Galloway's culture on a national and international stage by celebrating what makes this region unique, creative and forward-thinking.
- Arts and heritage must be part of how we plan for the future. We want to make sure they are included in regional planning, recovery strategies and long term investment, not just as add ons, but as essential building blocks for wellbeing, growth and pride of place.



OUR COMMITMENTS

get involved

We are committed to:

- **Creating a cultural network and championing the region's cultural ecosystem.**
- **Mapping the cultural sector.**
- **Preserving, celebrating and enhancing culture in Dumfries and Galloway.**

As a partnership, we are committed to working as sustainably as possible and striving towards carbon neutrality. In all that we do, we seek to reduce our environmental impact and support a cultural sector that values long term responsibility to people, place and planet.

We are committed to building a cultural sector that is equitable, representative and accessible for all, with inclusion at the heart of our values, leadership, strategy and programmes. By amplifying and reflecting a diversity of voices, places and

communities, including those often on the margins such as disabled people, rural residents, people from different cultures and those on low incomes, we aim to create a partnership that resonates with our rural context and gives visibility to underrepresented perspectives and experiences.

Culture links to a wide range of themes. We also aim to create links within the sector to explore the way culture intersects with:

- **Health and Well-being**
- **Governance and Fair Work**
- **Visitor Economy**
- **Education and Skills**
- **Community Wealth Building**

This is a shared journey. We're here to build with you. Your input, energy and creativity will shape how the partnership grows.



HOW OUR VALUES BENEFIT THE REGION

Strengthening local identity:

Culture helps celebrate who we are: our landscapes, stories, languages and shared history. By joining the DGCP, you are supporting cultural work rooted in D&G's places and people.

Boosting health and wellbeing:

Creative projects across the region already help reduce loneliness, improve mental health and bring people together. The DGCP ensures that this kind of impact is better supported and more widely recognised.

Driving economic growth:

Culture plays a vital role in tourism, regeneration and the wider economy. The DGCP supports creative careers, fair work and new income opportunities for local people.

Supporting education and skills:

From early years through to adult learning, culture builds confidence, creativity and lifelong learning. The Scottish Government's commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) includes the right to participate freely in cultural life and the arts, reinforcing the importance of cultural engagement for personal development. The DGCP champions access to cultural education and career pathways.

Encouraging collaboration:

The DGCP brings people and organisations together across different areas, helping them share ideas and local knowledge, pool resources, team up on projects and create sustainable, lasting relationships. By connecting people through the DGCP, we aim to reduce duplication, share resources and collaborate on bids more effectively.

Making the region more inclusive:

The Partnership is committed to fair access, equity, and ensuring that people from all backgrounds can take part in and shape cultural life here.

Raising Dumfries and Galloway's profile:

By supporting arts and heritage, we show that this is a vibrant, creative place to live, work and visit and that we invest in what makes it special.



Governance
& Fair Work



Community
Wealth-Building



Health
& Wellbeing



identity



skills



Education
& Skills



Visitor
Economy

HOW WE WILL ENGAGE WITH YOU

We will use the DGCP website and newsletter to keep you informed.

We will use partner networks to amplify key messages, share invitations to join the partnership and provide regular updates via Social Media.

- [Dumfries and Galloway Council](#)
- [DG Unlimited](#)
- [Dumfries and Galloway Museums and Heritage Network](#)
- [South of Scotland Enterprise](#)

We will collaborate with local venues and festivals to share information and host informal meet ups or open sessions.

We will attend existing community events to talk to you about the Partnership and encourage sign ups in person.

We will work with the region's local media.

We will offer multiple ways for you to take part, including online and in-person options, informal drop-ins and accessible and tailored information for a range of participants from different backgrounds and with different needs.

We pledge to use simple, jargon free language so that our messages speak to a wide range of people.



engage

A NOTE ON ENGAGING CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

There are times when working in the cultural sector can seem like a real challenge; you might be on your own or competing for funding, which is increasingly difficult to obtain. It may feel like others in the cultural sector are your competitors, but the DGCP want to move towards breaking down barriers of collaboration and support to ensure the long term sustainability and resilience of the sector across the entire region.

To truly engage people across the region, we all need to help shift the mindset from competition to collaboration.

The DGCP is your partnership and it will support a more connected and supportive cultural landscape by:

- Highlighting how working together can lead to greater impact.
- Celebrating successes across the region as shared successes.
- Creating space to exchange knowledge, tools and opportunities.
- Showing that collaboration results in stronger projects and wider reach.
- Joining regional gatherings or contributing to shared discussions helps individuals and organisations see the value of connection.

The DGCP want to build a future where every organisation's success contributes to the strength and vibrancy of the sector across the entire region. By working together, we can all thrive.

Exploring overlap of cultural sector messaging across audiences.

People engage with culture and heritage in lots of different ways: as artists, volunteers, teachers, organisers, carers, or local residents, and many fit into more than one of these groups. By recognising this, we can make sure our messages are clear, feel relevant to more people and aren't repeated in confusing or separate ways.

Examples of where things may overlap:

- A teacher might also run a local choir, write poetry, or help out at a museum.
- A performer might also work in schools, lead workshops, or run a small tourism business.
- An audience member at a gallery might also be part of a community group or care for a family member.
- A museum volunteer might also be a parent, a retired artist, or someone involved in local history.
- A creative entrepreneur might also be part of a local business network or community project.



Let's take
action
together!

dg cultural
PARTNERSHIP