
Report To: **Leadership Board**

On: **17 February 2016**

Report by: **Chief Executive**

Heading: **Draft Cultural Strategy for Renfrewshire**

1. Summary

- 1.1. The previous Renfrewshire Cultural Strategy was developed in 2010. The Sport, Leisure and Culture Policy Board approved a review of the strategy, including a consultation exercise.
 - 1.2. Following the transfer of Cultural Services to Renfrewshire Leisure and the establishment of the UK 2021 City of Culture team, a new draft strategy has been developed.
 - 1.3. Subsequent to Leadership Board approval, consultation will take place on the draft during February-April 2016 to ensure stakeholder feedback is incorporated, with a final strategy document presented to Leadership Board June 2016.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Leadership Board note the contents of this report and approve the Draft Cultural Strategy for further consultation.
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3. Background

- 3.1. The previous Renfrewshire Cultural strategy was in place between 2010-2014. The cultural strategy evolved into the Creative Renfrewshire strategy and a partnership of key cultural partners was formed to support the strategy implementation.
- 3.2. It was agreed at Sport, Leisure and Culture Policy Board to review the strategy to align its ambitions and objectives with the Paisley Town Centre Heritage Asset Strategy and the Renfrewshire Tourism framework. The strategy is a partnership document.

- 3.3. The consultations exercise on the Creative Renfrewshire strategy took place in early 2015. 339 people took part in the consultation: 189 attended various consultation events and 150 people completed the online questionnaire. The five main elements of the consultation process were: a consultation session in each of the five local area committee areas; a consultation with school pupils; an online consultation; a volunteering training event for volunteer consultation participants; and a final open consultation event held in Paisley Town Hall. This final event was an opportunity to feed back some of the findings gathered during the consultation period and invite further comments and views, particularly from the cultural sector. This final event had a more strategic focus, with the emphasis on establishing priorities for coming years.
- 3.4. From the consultation process the following key priority areas were identified:
- Improve access to information locally
 - Promote the area's unique identity
 - Cultural regeneration of communities
 - Change perceptions
 - Challenge barriers to participation
 - Develop outreach work
 - Empower local communities
 - Address related infrastructure challenges (transport, parking etc)
- 3.5. The draft strategy has incorporated the priority areas identified through the consultation into the strategic aims and objectives
- 3.6. Due to the importance of the Cultural Strategy to social and economic developments in Renfrewshire over the coming years, it has been designed with a general readership in mind. The intention is for someone who has not read a strategy document before to be able to easily follow the content. We have therefore tried to minimise the use of 'strategy language', to allow a wide range of partners and stakeholders to be able to see the direction of travel and the specific areas of development, and to feel that they have a part to play in achieving the vision. We took as our template the City of Gold Coast Cultural Strategy 2023 due to its overall clarity of purpose:
<http://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/documents/bf/cultural-strategy.pdf>
- 3.7. The period to 2023 covered by the new strategy has been chosen to align both with the Renfrewshire Community Plan period and the Paisley UK City of Culture bid development period and the subsequent programme delivery and legacy establishment activity that would follow a winning bid.
- 3.8. The vision: 'By 2023 the lives of everyone in Renfrewshire will be enriched and transformed by culture' sets an ambitious goal which reflects the potential of culture to add meaning to our lives (intrinsic purpose) as well as create positive change in our lives, particularly in addressing social and economic issues (instrumental purpose).

- 3.9. The 4 strategic outcomes have been designed to incorporate the key priority areas arising from the consultation.
- 3.10. The 8 objectives reflect further findings from the consultation, and emerging areas of strategic development.
- 3.11. Following Leadership Board approval, further consultation will be carried out over February and March. This has the following aims:
- to ensure delivery partner organisations have an opportunity to review and feedback on the draft document;
 - to seek the support of national agencies for the strategy, and to incorporate relevant advice, and
 - to seek general review and feedback from individuals, cultural bodies, public, private and third sectors in Renfrewshire, ensuring that the strategy is as relevant as possible to all.
- 3.12. The further consultation period is regarded as essential to ensure that we have a strong strategic direction with the buy-in of all involved, particularly as the strategy sets the scene for the UK 2021 City of Culture bid. We expect criteria for UK 2021 City of Culture to be released by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) during this consultation period, allowing us to consider any adjustments needed in the light of the criteria.
- 3.13. Following the incorporation of partner and stakeholder feedback, a final designed draft will be presented to the Leadership Board in June 2016.
- 3.14. An Action Plan will be developed for autumn 2016 to set out the planned activity across the full range of partners.
- 3.15. The Action Plan will be implemented through the Creative Renfrewshire Network, and be monitored by the Creative Renfrewshire Steering Board. Regular reports on progress will be brought back to the Leadership Board.

Implications of this report

1. Financial Implications

The investment to deliver the aims of the strategy will be supported by use of existing resources within partner organisations, supplemented by external funding sought by partners to deliver specific objectives.

2. HR and Organisational Development Implications

None.

3. Community Plan/Council Plan Implications

Children and Young People

- Our children and young people feel confident and responsible – able to participate fully in learning and in their wider community and take part in opportunities which meet their needs, interests and

aspirations

Community Care, Health and Well-being	- Get involved in activities that improve the health and wellbeing of their community; Enjoy good mental health
Empowering our Communities	- Have the capacity and resources to lead projects and be involved in service delivery
Greener	- Sustainable growth will be delivered by directing development to locations which create sustainable communities and high quality places
Jobs and the Economy	- Have attractive environments and successful town centres created through successful area regeneration. These contribute positively to local community and economic growth
Safer and Stronger	- Renfrewshire citizens as positive, supporting equality and valuing diversity to achieve fairness within our communities

4. Legal Implications

None.

5. Property/Assets Implications

None.

6. Information Technology Implications

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights Implications

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. Health and Safety Implications**
None.
- 9. Procurement Implications**
None.
- 10. Risk Implications**
None.
- 11. Privacy Impact**
None.

List of Background Papers

- (a) Draft Cultural Strategy for Renfrewshire: “Creative Renfrewshire”

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Creative Renfrewshire

Introduction

We are at a real moment of transformation in Renfrewshire. Never before have we come together with such a clear, coherent and ambitious vision for culture. This has come out of working together in partnership to define our goals. We recognise the potential for culture to bring about long lasting transformation for all our communities, and our aim is for this journey of cultural development to benefit present and future generations.

We have amazing places, talented people and great traditions to build on. With a growing self-belief in what we have to offer the world, this strategy points the way for our collective action.

Creative Renfrewshire clearly sets out the priorities and outcomes that will encourage greater participation in culture, and develop a stronger cultural sector within the area. It provides a co-ordinated approach to improving our cultural infrastructure, and strengthening our connections both within Renfrewshire and to the wider world.

Now is the time to be bold and ambitious. Our aim is for Paisley to be UK City of Culture 2021. We are all at the start of an exciting journey where Renfrewshire residents will be able to grow as we increase our capacity to take cultural activity to a higher level. Our mutual support and trust can only strengthen the outcomes.

The strategy will succeed with the input and contributions of many individuals and organisations across public, private and third sectors. With your commitment, we will create opportunity for our communities through culture, and share incredible experiences and achievements along the way.

Councillor James Harte
Chair,
Creative Renfrewshire Steering Board

Our vision:

By 2023 the lives of everyone in Renfrewshire will be enriched and transformed by culture

[Alternative responding to concern about reflecting the aspect of personal choice:

By 2023 everyone in Renfrewshire will have the opportunity to enrich their lives through culture, and our communities will be transformed by culture and its impacts]

Our aims are for Renfrewshire to be:

A place known for our distinctive culture

A place where creativity is supported by connectivity

A place where culture is created and experienced by everyone

A place where culture drives opportunity

We plan to:

Maximise the benefits and legacy of the Paisley UK 2021 City of Culture bid

Celebrate Renfrewshire's unique cultural and creative identity - past, present and future

Develop Renfrewshire's towns and villages as cultural and creative visitor destinations

Empower communities to establish and develop sustainable cultural activity

Build on our cultural infrastructure to develop the spaces and places we use to support creativity

Develop culture as a catalyst for positive attitudes towards health and wellbeing

Foster the development of creative professionals living and working in Renfrewshire, and champion their success

Invest in creative and cultural activity to stimulate new ideas, innovation and enterprise growth for the area

Our cultural landscape

We are known worldwide for the Paisley pattern, and the rich weaving and manufacturing traditions that Paisley and Renfrewshire was built on. Less well known is that we have the highest concentration of listed buildings in Scotland outside Edinburgh; the UK's largest youth theatre of its kind in PACE; and one of only four public observatories in the UK. We love dance – the national rate of participation for dance is 12%, in Renfrewshire it is 26%. We have other great assets – an international airport, the fourth busiest train station in Scotland, and fantastic cultural and historic venues, including the iconic Paisley Abbey.

Renfrewshire is home to a nationally recognised touring theatre venue which hosts a programme of live performance to rival venues in Scotland's cities. Our town halls attract audiences to performances and provide a home to many third sector cultural organisations. The Creative Renfrewshire Network has almost 300 members, representing communities across the area, in a wide range of creative forms including: visual arts, media, theatre, comedy, writing and music. Over recent years, a distinctive calendar of cultural events has evolved, including The Spree arts festival, Bring It All Home celebration of songwriting, and the Lochwinnoch Arts Festival.

We recognise that there are some significant gaps in our cultural landscape – Renfrewshire is one of 11 local authorities in Scotland which have no Creative Scotland Regularly Funded Organisations. We know that the environment to support creative professionals and businesses can be developed, and that we can improve how we connect and share information.

Renfrewshire, with its strong talent base and excellent transport connections, is well placed to develop a creative economy. By developing our cultural landscape, we believe this can kick-start economic regeneration, through developing skills, changing perceptions of what we have to offer, and bringing visitors and fresh investment to the area.

Working towards UK City of Culture 2021 will bring us together while building our capacity, and provide an opportunity to develop better national and international links. The next few years will see our cultural landscape transformed.

Why do we need a cultural strategy?

This strategy will support us to transform the way we work together, both within Renfrewshire and beyond.

It provides a co-ordinated and confident vision for the future that will inform our planning, programming and investment. It ensures that we use our resources wisely, by effectively targeting priority areas for development.

The strategy outlines the type of future we want to see for all our communities and the central role that culture and creativity will play in that future.

It sets the stage for the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid, and identifies how our ambition for UK City of Culture will guide our journey.

The strategy provides scope for collective action around cultural and creative developments, and will be reshaped as our collective voice becomes clearer and stronger.

Central to the strategy's success is the creative energy, vision and dynamism of our people, organisations and communities who will drive social and economic regeneration for the area.

What do we mean by culture?

By 'culture' we mean the following nine creative sectors:

advertising and marketing; architecture; crafts; design (product, graphic and fashion); film, tv, video, radio and photography; IT, software and computer services; publishing; museums, galleries and libraries; and music, performing and visual arts

as well as:

everyday participation (hobbies and pastimes); events and festivals; literature; play; food; Intangible Cultural Heritage (also known as ICH - living traditions like song and stories); archives; archaeology; astronomy; historic environment (buildings and monuments)

and blends and mixes of any of the above.

Developing the strategy

Work on a new regeneration strategy for Paisley town centre was concluded in 2014, and sets out a 15 year strategy based on Paisley's rich history and culture. It identifies the remarkable base of assets within the town from which to drive its economic regeneration and establish itself as a 'must do' destination for Scottish culture and arts.

In 2014 the Sports, Leisure and Culture Policy Board of Renfrewshire Council agreed to review the previous 2010 Creative Renfrewshire Strategy during 2014/15 and that the review should be informed by a Renfrewshire-wide consultation programme. It was intended that the consultation be open and inclusive and aim to reach those involved in the creative sector in Renfrewshire in various capacities as well as those members of the public who may have a more general interest. 339 people took part in the consultation – 189 people attended the consultation events with a further 150 completing the online questionnaire. The consultation was conducted by Creative Services Ltd, an independent consultancy. A report on the consultation was presented to the Sport, Leisure and Culture Policy Board in May 2015 and published on Renfrewshire Council's website. The five main elements of the consultation were:

- A consultation session in each of the five local area committees in Renfrewshire
- A consultation with primary pupils
- An online consultation
- A volunteer training event for 'Paisley Ambassadors'
- A final open consultation event in Paisley Town Hall

The key issues recommended by consultation participants as priority were:

- Improve access to information locally
- Promote the area's unique identity
- Cultural regeneration of communities
- Change perceptions
- Challenge the barriers to participation
- Develop outreach work
- Empower local communities
- Address related infrastructure challenges

These priority issues have been incorporated into the development of the strategic outcomes and objectives

[Note: the following text to be added to final draft]

A draft strategy was presented to Renfrewshire Council Leadership Board in February 2016. A further consultation on the draft strategy was conducted February – April 2016, ensuring the opportunity for stakeholder feedback to be incorporated. The strategy was finalised in June 2016]

This strategy supports delivery against the aims of a number of other key strategies:

Renfrewshire's Community Plan 2013-2023 identifies the key areas for intervention and prevention as: poverty and disadvantage, misuse of alcohol and drugs, low attainment and worklessness, offending and violent behaviour, and preventable ill health and injury.

Renfrewshire's Tackling Poverty Strategy 2015-17 sets as its priorities:

Increase the number of households who can access employment that provides an acceptable standard of living; Prevent financial crisis and support low income families to make the most of their money; Improve levels of physical and mental health of children in low income families; Close the educational attainment gap between children from low income families and their better off peers; Create neighbourhoods where people want to live, and can afford to live; Narrow inequalities by working in a way which is inclusive, effective and evidence-based.

The vision of **Renfrewshire Digital Participation Plan 2016** is that in a Digital Renfrewshire we will make sure that everybody has the opportunity to reach their digital potential. We are determined that everyone has the means of access, awareness, skills and confidence to participate online responsibly.

Paisley: The Untold Story (Town Centre Asset Strategy and Action Plan)

Paisley will use its outstanding architecture and its wealth of cultural assets and collections to drive its economic regeneration and establish itself as an international destination for Scottish culture and contemporary performing arts.

Creative Renfrewshire is developed within the context of some key initiatives being delivered as part of the Untold Story:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
UK City of Culture 2021	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Blue	Blue
New Paisley Central Library	Orange	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
Paisley Museum Project	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Green	Light Blue
New Paisley Museum Store	Orange	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
Cultural, Heritage and Events fund	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
Creative Scotland Place Partnership	Green	Green	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
Proposed theatre complex	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Green	Light Blue	Light Blue

Yellow = seeking funding / developing bid

Orange = development

Green = delivery

Blue = legacy

Creative Renfrewshire supports strategic Scottish Government objectives, as reflected in the following policies:

- Creative Scotland 10 Year Plan 2014-2024: Unlocking Potential Embracing Ambition
- Going Further: The National Strategy for Scotland's Museums and Galleries
- Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015-2020
- Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland

Who's involved

This strategy will be developed and delivered by a wide range of partners working in collaboration, ranging from local voluntary groups to international touring companies. The partners noted below will be key, and will be supported by many others.

Creative Renfrewshire Network

Engage Renfrewshire

Paisley 2021 Community Development Trust

Paisley First

Paisley 2021 Partnership Board

Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce

Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership

Renfrewshire Council

Renfrewshire Leisure Limited

St Mirren Football Club

University of the West Scotland

West College Scotland

Community and voluntary sector organisations

Health and social care organisations

Education providers

Representative forums and networks

Creative professionals

Creative businesses

Public transport providers

International partners

National development bodies and agencies, including: Creative Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland, Scottish Libraries and Information Council, Historic Environment Scotland, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts & Business and Big Lottery

[Note: this list can be expanded during the draft consultation period, when we will seek the support of specific organisations as part of the consultation]

Our approach:

The Cultural Strategy will be underpinned by a commitment to partnership, collaboration and responding to the best creative and cultural practice. We will strive to be the most imaginative and ambitious we can be to enable meaningful cultural activity that is relevant to the people of Renfrewshire and to the wider world.

Over the next few years, our cultural and creative landscape will change significantly. We will remain open and responsive in our approach. As we make progress, and what started out as aspiration becomes real, we will review, re-imagine and reshape our direction. In the initial implementation of this strategy, we particularly welcome approaches and initiatives that focus on:

- Exceptional creative practice
- Community participation and opportunity in high quality creative experiences
- Exploring our unique cultural identity, past, present and future
- Partnership commitment to strengthening Renfrewshire's cultural landscape through a collaborative approach
- Projects and initiatives that support business creativity
- Developing networks to support creative practice across disciplines e.g. performers working with creative technologists
- Developing our creative capacity through experimentation and reflection
- Developing a strong sense of place through unique cultural development

Strategic Outcome 1: A place known for our distinctive culture

What will our communities see ?

- A successfully delivered UK City of Culture 2021 programme, which has put Paisley on the international stage, inspired further cultural and creative confidence and developed the local economy
- A new museum which is a unique expression of the rich and varied cultural identity of Renfrewshire, both through its engaging content and a vibrant visitor experience
- An increase in cultural tourism to Renfrewshire, with related economic benefits for local people
- Greater civic pride in Renfrewshire, its unique assets and cultural expressions

Our key actions:

- Deliver a successful bid for UK City of Culture 2021, informed by the cultural identity of Renfrewshire, past, present and future
- Deliver a successful UK City of Culture 2021 programme, embedding unique cultural expressions for which Paisley is widely recognised
- Develop the museum project as a major visitor destination to tell exciting and diverse stories of Renfrewshire's culture, providing an international platform for our unique and significant textiles heritage
- Develop cultural tourism by promoting Renfrewshire's distinctive cultural opportunities
- Grow talent, develop skills and create strong partnerships and networks to support an enhanced distinctive cultural landscape

Indicators of success :

- Increased economic impact
- Increase in bed nights related to cultural tourism
- Increase in museum visitors
- Participation rates of local people in City of Culture events
- Numbers of people from outside Renfrewshire attending City of Culture events
- Improved perceptions of Paisley and Renfrewshire, both amongst residents and those beyond Renfrewshire

Related Objectives:

- Maximise the benefits and legacy of the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid
- Celebrate Renfrewshire's unique cultural and creative identity - past, present and future
- Develop Renfrewshire's towns and villages as cultural and creative visitor destinations

Strategic Outcome 2: A place where creativity is supported by connectivity

What will our communities see ?

- A better connected cultural infrastructure – improved spaces, transport and information flow
- Co-ordinated, clear and accessible information about cultural opportunities
- More ambitious cultural experiences, as a result of our improved connections and relationships

Our key actions

- Create and develop appropriate and accessible spaces for cultural and creative activity
- Work with transport providers to improve public transport to venues
- Develop our capacity to build partnerships and networks, nationally and internationally
- Nurture creative, social and business networks to enrich creativity and engagement across Renfrewshire and beyond
- Develop and implement effective communications mechanisms
- Develop creative use of digital technology and new media to increase connections within and beyond Renfrewshire
- Develop our capacity to optimise income through sharing skills, knowledge and resources
- Develop a Place Partnership, co-funded by Creative Scotland, to strengthen and embed our partnership approach

Indicators of success:

- Increase in awareness of cultural opportunities, and ability to access cultural opportunities
- Increase in number of strategic partnerships with national agencies and networks
- Increase in number of international collaborations, including exchanges and involvement in international networks

Related Objectives:

- Maximise the benefits and legacy of the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid
- Build on our cultural infrastructure to develop the spaces and places we use to support creativity
- Empower communities to establish and develop sustainable cultural activity

Strategic Outcome 3: A place where culture is created and experienced by everyone

What will our communities see ?

- Confident, successful and ambitious individuals and groups in Renfrewshire, creating and presenting quality cultural work and experiences in the community for the community
- Venues which are vibrant spaces providing a home for local, national and international work
- More opportunities for creative professionals to develop and create work
- Cultural activity which reflects the diverse interests, experiences and needs of the population, and is accessible and meaningful to all
- Communities developing and delivering their own cultural activity on a sustainable basis

Our key actions

- Ensure that the benefits of the UK City of Culture bid process and programme have a broad reach and maximise social impact.
- Develop and deliver a new theatre and cinema complex, providing a space for everyone to get involved with excellent cultural experiences in an inspiring environment
- Develop and deliver a new Paisley Central Library, providing a welcoming, accessible venue for people to learn, and to create and experience culture
- Share knowledge, skills and support to enable communities to plan their own cultural development
- Support the development of community venues to provide dynamic spaces which encourage and support creative practice
- Ensure outreach opportunities address key social issues by targeting those who are marginalised
- Develop opportunities which proactively address barriers to participation, and ensure equality

Indicators of success:

- Number of local cultural groups and individuals in Creative Renfrewshire Network
- Increase in number of people attending and participating in cultural activity
- Increase in usage of Paisley Central Library
- Significant usage of theatre and cinema complex

Relevant Objectives:

- Maximise the benefits and legacy of the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid
- Empower communities to establish and develop sustainable cultural activity
- Develop Renfrewshire's towns and villages as cultural and creative visitor destinations

Strategic Outcome 4: A place where culture drives opportunity

What will our communities see ?

- Transformed perceptions of what Paisley and Renfrewshire have to offer, nationally and internationally
- Cultural involvement having a positive influence on health and wellbeing at population level, through increased confidence, self-esteem, realised potential and personal fulfilment
- Increased economic growth, both directly and indirectly, as a result of cultural, creative and enterprise activity and transformed perceptions
- Increased cultural and creative opportunities that will support individuals to overcome social isolation, and will lead to increased social cohesion, confidence and employability skills
- Increased ambition as young people consider the Creative and Cultural Industries as a viable career option in Renfrewshire
- Increased talent retention in the area from Renfrewshire's college and university through the development of collaborative initiatives and support platforms

Our key actions

- Improve skills development and business development support to ensure available routes into commercialising creative and cultural sector growth
- Develop collaborative initiatives and support platforms for recent college and university graduates
- Develop programmes designed to support health and wellbeing, and overcoming social isolation
- Develop cultural volunteering opportunities to support social cohesion, skills development and personal fulfilment
- Provide careers support to young people interested in accessing creative and cultural careers Establishment of residency programmes

Indicators of success:

- An increased programme of cultural and creative activities, opportunities and events that support skills and business development
- Increased audience participation and opportunity (locally and internationally)
- An increased number of successful applications to Creative Scotland funding streams, ensuring a rise in the Local Authority ranking of per head levels of investment
- Increase in Creative Scotland Regularly Funded Organisations based in Renfrewshire
- An increased number of creative businesses, sole traders and creative clusters/places to create and develop skills in Renfrewshire
- Improvements in health and wellbeing attributable to cultural participation

Related Objectives:

- Maximise the benefits and legacy of the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid
- Invest in creative and cultural activity to stimulate new ideas, innovation and enterprise growth for the area
- Foster the development of creative professionals living and working in Renfrewshire, and champion their success
- Develop the role of culture as a catalyst for positive attitudes towards health and wellbeing

How we will put the strategy into action

An Action Plan will underpin the Strategy, gathering together information about the activity across the Creative Renfrewshire Network which delivers the aims. We will also develop a plan for extensive monitoring and evaluation of the strategy.

An annual report on the effectiveness of the strategy will be produced, with clear and accessible information on progress against targets, and presented to both Renfrewshire Leisure Limited Board and the Creative Renfrewshire Steering Board

The period 2016-2017 will see an intensive focus on developing our readiness to bid for UK City of Culture 2021. The outcome of this process will be known in late 2017. This significant milestone on our journey will represent a natural review point of the strategy. A review of the strategy will therefore be conducted in early 2018.

Address to my Brither Wabsters

Thomas Burnside

To you, dear brethren o' the shuttle
I maun address a word or twa.
The weaving trade's noo turned sae fickle,
In fact, it's wearing fast awa;
Wee bits o' wabs no wurth the looming,
A state o' things we a' deplore,
That keeps us ever constant grinning
Wi' poortith never frae oor door.

Wi' selfish agents in the kintra,
An' greedy grasping corks at hame,
The weaver's life' made cauld and wintry,
Wi' mony a scrimpit hungry wame.
Come then, arise, be up an' doing,
Let's aim at something for oorsel',
An' no our doonward course keep wooing,
An' soundin aye our funeral knell.

Come show the world we still are able,
Though as a class we're sunk sae low,
To mak the weaving trade so stable
That comforts to our hames will flow;
Come form a strong organization,
Let each and all assistance len'
To organised co-operation,
An' show the world we still are men.

For what's to hinder us, as weavers,
To manufacture for oorself?
Let's but keep clear o' fause deceivers,
There's nocht ava that I can tell.
I'm sure there's plenty heads for planning,
An' willing han's to execute,
So that wi' proper understand'ing,
We'll sure succeed without a doot.

Let ilka ane, wi' brave heart struggle,
Wi' diligence his lot pursue,
An' ne'er let envy gie him trouble,
But 'paddle aye his ain canoe;'
And then e'er lang oor textile fabrics
Will sure be worn by ilka frien',
Baith harness shawl an linen cambric,
Fit to adorn our British Queen.

In vain shall tyrants try to bend us,
If we the golden rule pursue,
The people's love will well befrien' us,
The many then will help the few,
Come then stand forth, be firm and truthful,
Tho mony doots the mind may fill,
An' wi' each ither aye be trustful,
An' then we'll in the end prevail.

Thomas Burnside was born in Paisley in 1822. He worked as a weaver then for two years ran a small shop with a circulating library. This foundered and he sold up and returned to weaving. He was 43 before he started writing.

Taken from the anthology of poems 'Radical Renfrew', compiled by the poet Tom Leonard when he was Writer in Residence at Paisley Central Library in the late 1980s.