

# PRESS RELEASE



## Title: **‘CULTURAL COMPACT’ WILL RELEASE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL AROUND BAY**

### **Content**

Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region (LSCER) has been announced as one of only two “rural” areas in the UK to be accepted as an Arts Council Cultural Compact – an innovative new approach to releasing untapped economic potential through investment in culture.

A joint submission to be an "early adopter" of the Cultural Compact model was made by the LSCER collaboration, made up of Barrow Borough Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council, and approved by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Focussing on one of the LSCER’s key themes – Culture, Creative, and Visitor Economy – the Cultural Compact strategic cross-sector partnership will harness and build on the potential of our natural and built environment, the Lake District World Heritage Site, Eden Project North, creative industries, arts and festivals, industrial heritage and the visitor economy, supporting the LSCER Business Prospectus in driving a place-based approach to cultural investment and growth together in the sub region.

The existing LSCER partnership will bring together key stakeholders to work and innovate to realise the vision for Morecambe Bay – a significant change in how things have been done by piloting a model connecting the three localities’ distinct and different cultural assets to boost future creativity, investment, innovation, jobs and prosperity.

Alison Clark, the Arts Council's Director for the North region, said: "We believe that arts and culture play an essential role in improving lives and wellbeing, developing communities and unlocking the economic potential for towns and cities. The collaboration between the Lancaster and South Cumbria Economic Region (LSCER) will build effective networks across a broad range of partners and we look forward to the impact the Cultural Compact will bring."

The first stage will be for the three local authorities to bring together identified organisations and key partners to develop the formation of a Morecambe Bay Culture Compact Partnership that will see the development of the vision, membership, partnership and purpose – before establishing a Morecambe Bay Cultural Compact Partnership board to lead and drive delivery, act as the strategic voice for the cultural and heritage sector across the Bay and champion the project.

The cross-sector membership of the Cultural Compact would bring together the local authorities, LEPs, universities, colleges, business, cultural and creative organisations, practitioners, health sector, industry and community representatives and voluntary sector.

Councillor Helen Wall, BBC’s spokesperson for Heritage and Culture said “I hope this project will open up exciting new opportunities to enhance and extend our cultural offer.

We have enormously talented and creative arts organisations, including National Portfolio Organisations, communities and individuals in Barrow who will be able to make an exceptional contribution to this initiative.”

Originally intended to operate across cities, the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is interested to see if the Cultural Compact idea can work with a rural model.

Councillor Ann Thomson, Leader of Barrow Borough Council, said “The Cultural Compact offers the opportunity for Barrow Borough to work with our partners, Lancaster and South Lakeland, in promoting arts and culture around the bay. Barrow came top of all 325 English boroughs for the quality of its landscapes and the number of its nature reserves in 2016 and we look forward to building on the potential of the environment around the bay to encourage cultural investment and support economic growth”

The submission highlighted how culture could be a catalyst for change by re-energising our economy, finding new ways of working with partners “to be outward looking, experimental and exploratory to see how the distinctiveness of Morecambe Bay can deliver a new tidal base of creativity and culture embedded within broader strategic development.”

It said: "Morecambe Bay's cultural potential is significant – embodied in the Morecambe Bay Eden Project North and capital developments of Windermere Jetty, Abbot Hall and Dove Cottage in South Lakeland, the development of a Central Barrow Masterplan coupled with its aspiration to be a Creative People and Place, and the redevelopment of the Canal Quarter in Lancaster embracing the Dukes and Ludus."

## **Ends**

For more information please contact:

Policy Regeneration & Information  
Development Services  
Barrow Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Barrow in Furness  
LA14 2LD  
Tel. 01229 876363  
Email: [developmentplans@barrowbc.gov.uk](mailto:developmentplans@barrowbc.gov.uk)