

A detailed historical map of Lancashire, showing numerous towns, rivers, and forests. The map is color-coded with various shades of green, brown, and blue. In the top left corner, there are three white arrows pointing downwards. In the bottom right corner, there are three white arrows pointing to the right. The Lancashire County Council logo is overlaid on the map.

Lancashire

County
Council



Lancashire Archives and Local History Strategy

2026 – 2028



Foreword



County Councillor Ella Worthington
Cabinet Member for Civic Pride

The Lancashire Archives and Local History service plays a vital role in recording and retelling the stories of Lancastrians over the past millennia, connecting us with our shared heritage and making these records available to current and future generations.

The team in our Accredited Archives service have the skill and expertise to care for our archives and bring local history

to life, they work closely with valued partners including the Friends of Lancashire Archives, and create opportunities for volunteering and local community engagement.

Our vision is to make our collections accessible to everyone, and through preserving and celebrating Lancashire's heritage to build stronger communities and enhance Civic Pride.

Our values

- Supportive
- Innovative
- Respectful
- Collaborative

Working together

- With residents
- With partners
- With councillors
- With colleagues

Being accountable

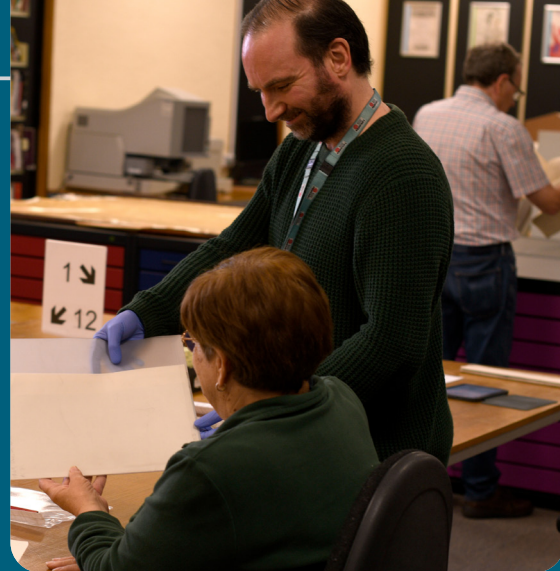
- Managing performance
- Delivering our priority programmes
- Balancing our budget





Contents

Introduction	5
What we do	6
Context	7
Cultural Services Strategic Objectives	8
Lancashire Archives and Local History Strategic Goals	9
How we will measure our performance	12
Statutory and legal basis for Lancashire Archives	13
Background papers and standards	14



Introduction

We enrich people's lives across Lancashire by providing an accessible and engaging archives service, up to date with the latest technology, and preserving treasures of the past. We have a positive impact on people's lives, through the information we provide and the experiences we offer and we promote democratic engagement through collecting local government and public records.

Our purpose is to offer information, inspiration, and connectedness and to promote Civic Pride through greater awareness of Lancashire's history and communities.

We inspire people and communities to explore their heritage, promoting and continuing to collect Lancashire's archives while preserving them for everyone to use and enjoy, now and in the future.

ARCHIVES

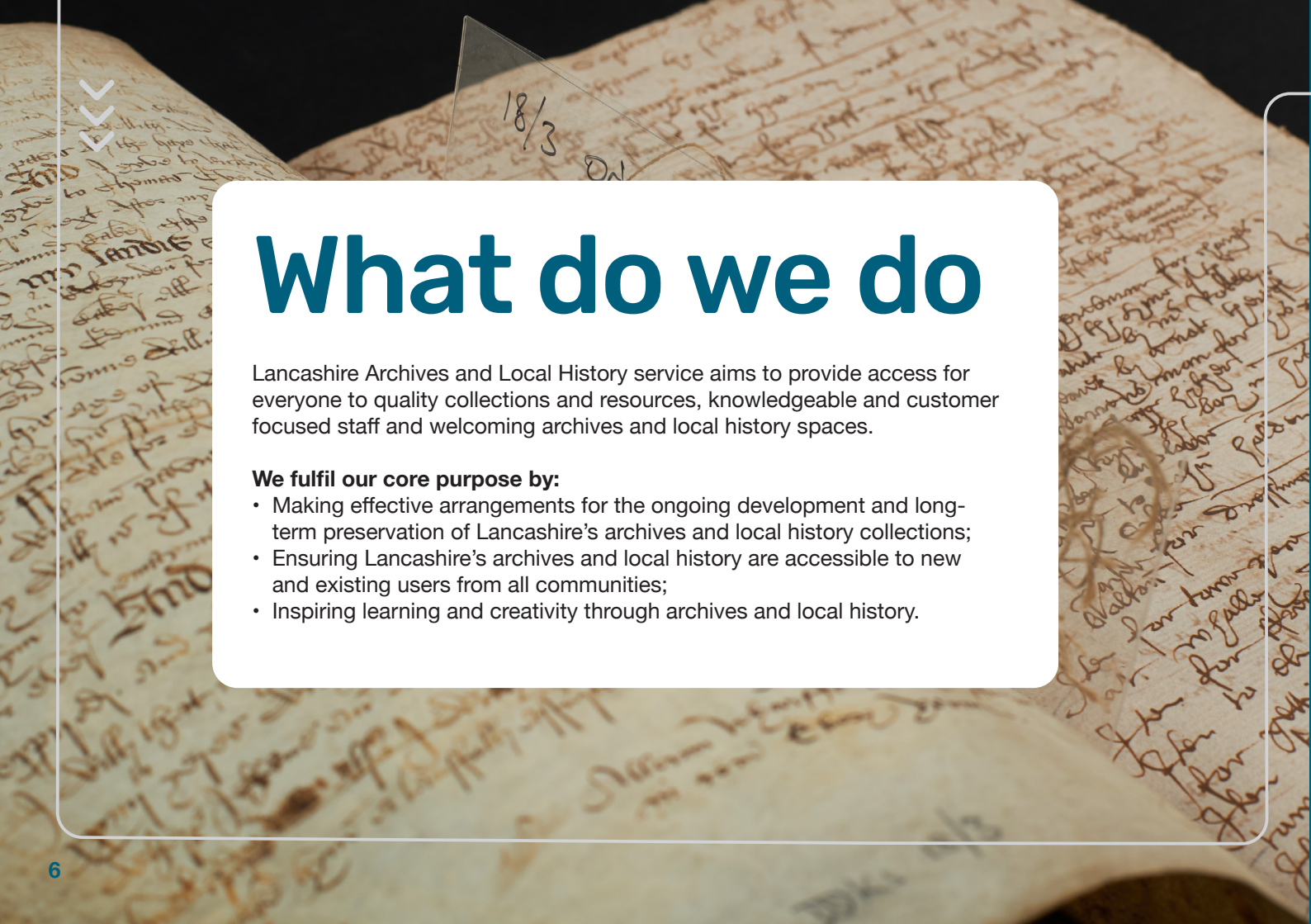
LANCASHIRE HISTORY MAGAZINE

**SUNSHINE, SOCA
AND SPICE**

Preston
Caribbean
Carnival Exhibition
at Lancashire
Archives

**THE FLEETWOOD
FLOOD OF 1927**

**FROM CRIME SCENE
TO CAMERA**
Lancashire's Police
Archives



What do we do

Lancashire Archives and Local History service aims to provide access for everyone to quality collections and resources, knowledgeable and customer focused staff and welcoming archives and local history spaces.

We fulfil our core purpose by:

- Making effective arrangements for the ongoing development and long-term preservation of Lancashire's archives and local history collections;
- Ensuring Lancashire's archives and local history are accessible to new and existing users from all communities;
- Inspiring learning and creativity through archives and local history.



Context

In 2026, The National Archives published the Government's vision for archives in England. The vision acknowledges the role that services such as Lancashire Archives and Local History play in stewarding collections that make up our shared memory, provide inspiration that sparks creative works, and unlock vital data that enable research and effective administration.

Archives provide transparency on past actions, support evidence-based policy making and play a pivotal role in public inquiries that hold decision makers to account. They have an impact on every part of society and underpin our democracy.

The UK Government's vision for archives is that they are, "valued and preserved as a source of inspiration for everyone. The foundation of this vision is the integral role of archives at the heart of society.

Archives preserve the records of our shared past, deepen our understanding of the present, and plant the seeds of inspiration for our future."

The National Archives and the vision steering group identified three interconnected strategic themes. These themes represent the key areas that archives must excel in.

Archives must be:

- Accessible – Sharing collections beyond our walls
- Inclusive – Representing the communities archives serve
- Sustainable – Ensuring archives endure for the future

Lancashire Archives and Local History will work with partners to support these ambitions.

Cultural Services Strategic Objectives



Lancashire Archives and Local History will work to deliver the five strategic objectives set out in the Cultural Services Strategy, 2025-2028, which will help to meet the County Council's vision.

- Create lifelong learning opportunities to enrich lives and to benefit from cultural services.
- Improve the inclusivity of our cultural offers enabling everyone to engage as audience, participant, or creative producer.
- Empower people to lead healthier and fulfilled lives through access to high quality information, a wide range of activities and positive social interaction.
- Inspire young people through a cultural offer enriching their lives and creating opportunities for personal development.
- Ensure our collections are accessible, contributing to Civic Pride and a sense of belonging for all communities.





Lancashire Archives and Local History Strategic Goals

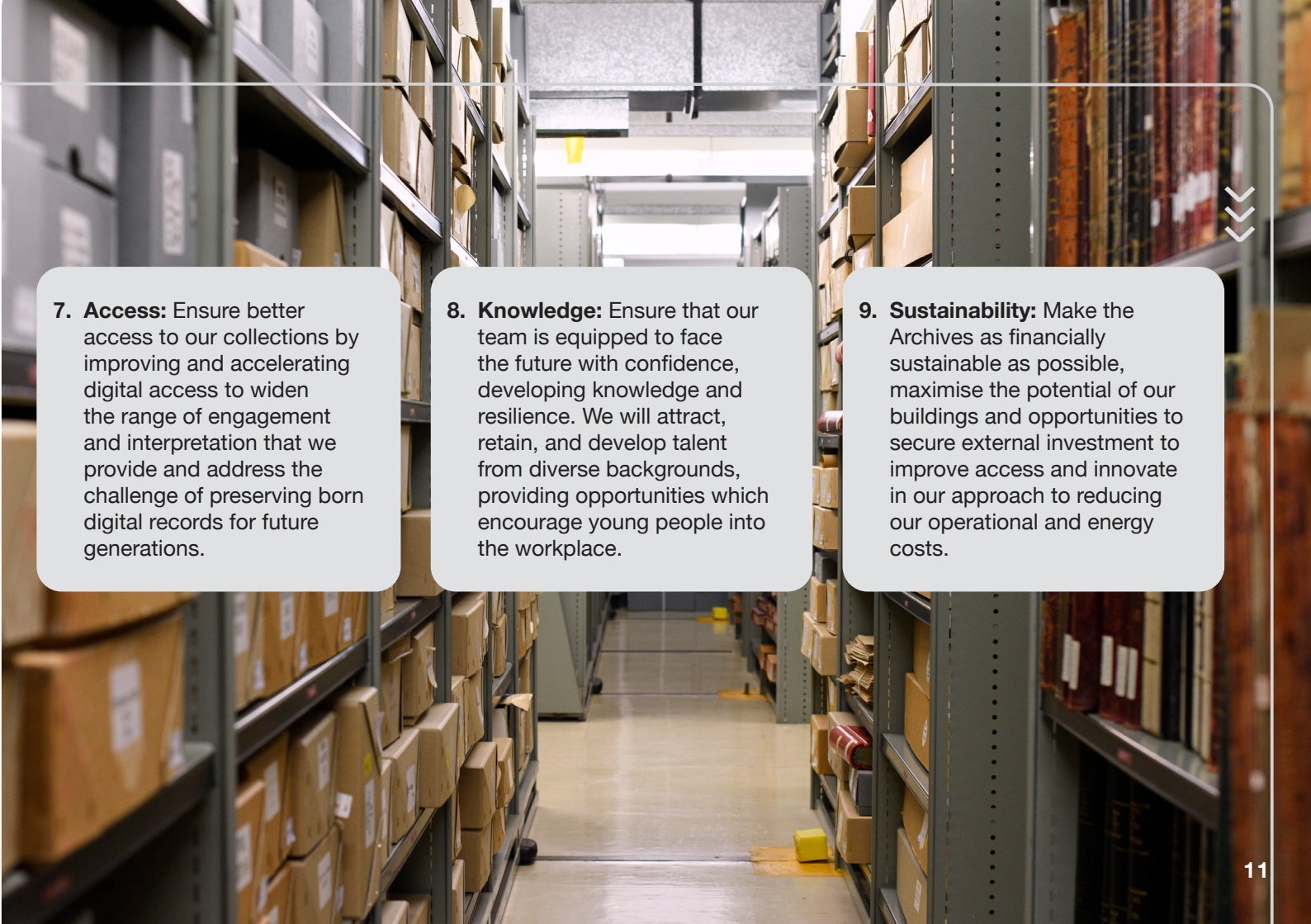
- 1. Record Keeping:** Engage our customers and communities with an Archives and Local History offer which is for everyone, well resourced, accountable, and creative; promoting effective record keeping in physical and digital formats to support democratic engagement and serving future generations.
- 2. Identity:** Preserve Lancashire's memory by providing community access and enhancing understanding of place and Identity, engendering Civic Pride, and supporting existing networks with partners, volunteers, the Friends of Lancashire Archives and the education sector.
- 3. Quality:** Be ambitious, innovative and committed to improving the quality of our Archives service, investigate the development of the Bow Lane Record Office building and provide a high-quality Archives service that meets The National Archives Accreditation Scheme standards.



4. Inclusivity: Be inclusive and understand the needs of individuals, removing barriers to access and working alongside other teams in Cultural Services to increase the number of people who benefit from the service, archive collections and resources, to improve their quality of life and fulfil their potential through participation, creativity and learning.

5. Engagement: Champion the role that archive collections can play in cultural, health and economic outcomes including supporting local communities and mental wellbeing – cultivating creativity, skills development, volunteering, learning and strengthening our understanding of identity and belonging – working alongside Lancashire Libraries, Lancashire Museums and other partners.

6. Civic Pride: Build and maintain a sense of Lancashire's identity and civic pride through collecting and preserving physical and digital archives, documenting the county's history, and support sustainable collecting in archives, working actively with under-represented groups and individuals so that collections are reflective of Lancashire communities; ensuring that archival records across Lancashire are safeguarded through the Local Government Reorganisation process.



7. Access: Ensure better access to our collections by improving and accelerating digital access to widen the range of engagement and interpretation that we provide and address the challenge of preserving born digital records for future generations.

8. Knowledge: Ensure that our team is equipped to face the future with confidence, developing knowledge and resilience. We will attract, retain, and develop talent from diverse backgrounds, providing opportunities which encourage young people into the workplace.

9. Sustainability: Make the Archives as financially sustainable as possible, maximise the potential of our buildings and opportunities to secure external investment to improve access and innovate in our approach to reducing our operational and energy costs.



How we will measure our performance

We have established different ways of measuring our performance.

We will:

- Produce an annual operational business plan to ensure that the strategy is delivered;
- Contribute to the annual report for Cultural Services;
- Have key performance indicators for all areas of our strategy which are reviewed annually;
- Continue to benchmark all aspects of

- performance against other local authorities and the wider archives and heritage sectors;
- Monitor our services by using both data and the experiences of our communities and audiences in line with The National Archives, Archives Accreditation Scheme, and in compliance with statutory requirements;
- Measure our performance against our financial budget each year;
- Review progress and make any additional actions needed to implement the strategy.

Statutory and legal basis for Lancashire Archives

Lancashire Archives serves as the corporate memory of Lancashire County Council. It provides archive services to Lancashire County Council and its constituent authorities under sections 224 and 226(5) of the Local Government Act 1972. It exercises the county's powers in respect of historical, private and business records under the terms of the Local Government (Records) Act 1962, as amended.

It also provides an archive storage service for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council under a service level agreement, renewed annually.

Its core functions are carried out within a complex legal framework that includes:

- Public Records Acts 1958, as amended
- Law of Property (Amendment) Act 1924 and the Manorial Document Rules 1959, as amended

- Tithe (Copies of Instruments of Apportionment) Rules 1960-1963
- Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978, as amended

Lancashire Archives also works within the legal framework of the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015



Background papers and standards

This strategy has been informed by and supports the message and ambitions of the following key documents:

- Lancashire County Council, Moving the dial on our priorities, 2026-2027; Council Plan 2025-2030
- The UK Government's Strategic Vision for Archives, 2026
- Lancashire County Council, Cultural Services Strategy, 2025-2028
- Let's create: Our Strategy 2020 – 2030, Arts Council England, 2020
- Lancashire County Council, The Lancashire Way Education Strategy, 2025–2028

These specifications and standards define best practice for our archive service:

- EN 16893:2018 Conservation of Cultural Heritage
- PAS 197:2009 -Code of practice for cultural collections management
- British Standard BS4971:2017-Conservation and care
- The national Archives Service Accreditation standard, as proscribed by The National Archives





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