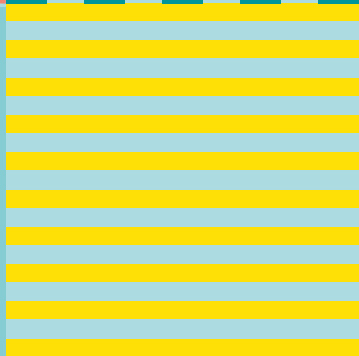
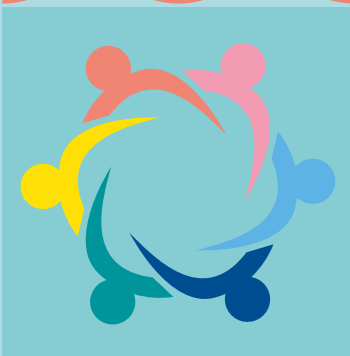
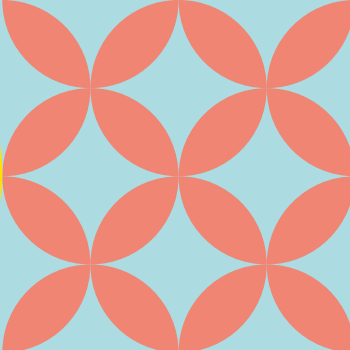




Thurrock Plan for Culture

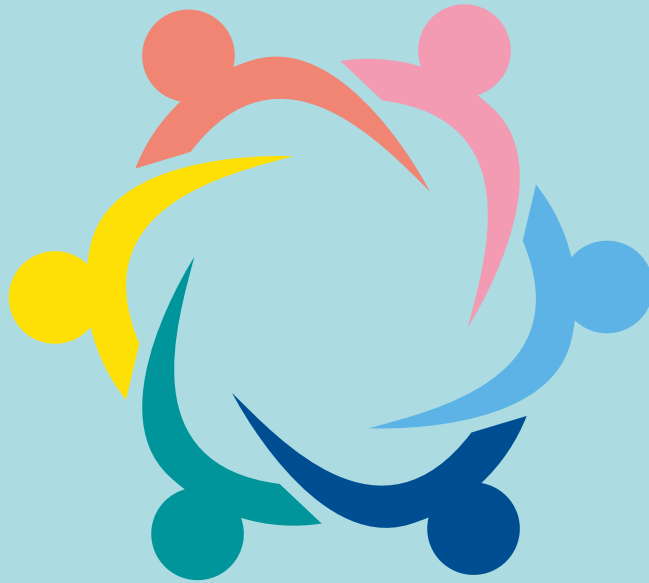
2025 – 2029





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The Thurrock Plan for Culture is a future-facing, collective call to action to harness the power of culture to create greater impact in our place and for our people.

The Plan sets a direction for transformational change in our place - a clear route towards activating spaces and places with creative and cultural activity, celebrating our unique heritage and diverse cultural offer, and supporting Thurrock's creative talent to thrive.

Key to achieving a culturally ambitious future is a shared commitment to work in partnership with communities, creative and cultural organisations and key stakeholders embracing the values of co-creation and cooperation.

By drawing together different people, ideas and resources, we will ensure that culture and creativity is valued widely, and the benefits are felt by everyone, now and for years to come.



Executive Summary

The Thurrock Plan for Culture sets out a shared ambition and commitment to work collaboratively and embrace the values of co-creation and cooperation to deliver change through culture and creativity. Through engagement with people who live, work and are educated in Thurrock, we have listened to range of views, and captured insight and data that has identified key themes which will help shape our priorities for action. These themes, which focus on Cultural Connections, Cultural Capacity and Cultural Capital, have been recognised as important to partners and will be owned by everyone who has a stake in growing culture and creativity in Thurrock.

Embracing the theme of Cultural Connections, which aims to place culture and creativity at the heart of everyday life, we will foster meaningful connections amongst communities, celebrate Thurrock's diverse cultures and traditions and encourage partners to create engaging and inclusive experiences which bring people together, strengthen mutual respect, and widen opportunity for all.

Focusing on our ambition to grow creative and cultural production, performance and presentation, through the theme of Cultural Capacity, Thurrock's creative and cultural sector will be supported to build on existing strengths, grow the talent pipeline and stimulate ambition and growth, recognising the important role that creative and cultural businesses, individuals and organisations have in society.

Maximising the value of culture to deliver positive outcomes that enhance place, improve quality of life and positively impact the wider determinants of health, the theme of Cultural Capital recognises that providing opportunities for people to come together and take part in culture can enrich lives, reduce inequalities, and cultivate a more prosperous and inclusive future for all, helping to shape places that are distinctive and vibrant, stimulating local economies and employment opportunities.

Culture creates connections between people and the places where they live, work, visit and play. It creates opportunities for people to feel a sense of belonging, so that they can both contribute to and benefit from their place. Creating places that harness local cultural distinctiveness, provide opportunities for community participation and civic engagement, and enable inclusive access to all, contributes towards place-making, integrated and active communities and ultimately, improved quality of life. Taking ground up approaches to cultural development with people at the centre will support 'buy in', longevity and more resilient communities.

Arts Council England has acknowledged that historically Thurrock has drawn down limited funds for culture compared to other areas and designated Thurrock as one of 109 places outside London that have the opportunity to benefit from additional support and investment. Creating greater impact from culture through increased investment and support underpins this plan and will galvanise partners to work together to achieve positive change. Thurrock has been proactive in moving towards a more ambitious cultural future, and a number of significant cultural developments are underway providing the opportunity and conditions to capitalise on new cultural capacity and optimism and stimulate local cultural growth, including investment from national and regional stakeholders to support creative and cultural programmes, growth and skills aspirations.

Thurrock Council will act as an enabler and facilitator of this Plan, rather than a commissioner or direct deliverer. The Council has committed to supporting the coordination of creative and cultural opportunities, utilising funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, working with partners to shape future actions that will realise this plan.

Recognising where we are now and where we want to be, the following have been identified as short, medium and long-term actions which create a shared vision and clear direction of travel for partners to achieve a more sustainable, culturally ambitious future for Thurrock. Many of these actions can be achieved without new or additional resource by supporting activity that draws together collective talent, knowledge, and funding to achieve, better coordination and use of existing resources and strong cooperation and collaboration between partners and stakeholders.

Appendix 1 provides a more detailed Action Plan, however in summary the actions include:

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

- Coordination of events, activities and marketing to raise the profile and reach of the local offer.
- Opening up new places and spaces for culture.
- Create a central pool of cultural volunteers.

CULTURAL CAPACITY

- Establish a seed fund to support innovation.
- Create opportunities to activate the Thurrock Meanwhile Opportunities Strategy.
- Establish or strengthen local cultural leadership groups and forums.
- Develop a capacity building plan to include a suite of professional development opportunities.

CULTURAL CAPITAL

- Map investment programmes to identify shared objectives and outcomes.
- Strengthen careers support and understanding of post 16 creative and cultural pathways.
- Build better collective understanding across partners and stakeholders to grow cultural opportunity.

Underpinning these actions is the need to establish clear governance by creating a Cultural Leadership Group which is diverse, inclusive and representative of Thurrock.

In parallel, we need to ensure that children and young people's voices are championed, that a Thurrock-wide evidence of impact framework is developed, that we take a collaborative approach on funding opportunities and that we ensure resident voice and co-creation informs creative and cultural activity.



Introduction

Thurrock is located on the north shore of the River Thames, a short distance from the east of London, and Essex to the north and east. Thurrock's location includes towns and villages surrounded by acres of parks, countryside and heritage sites. Urban centres are a vibrant mix of established towns and new young communities, with a diverse and growing population of around 176,000 residents.

Nationally significant cultural organisations and artists coexist with emerging creative practitioners and a vibrant community sector to develop talent and serve diverse audiences. Our heritage assets and maritime industry connect to a global narrative of trade and migration, and we are a nexus for Creative and Cultural Industries within the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, a sector which generates skilled jobs and productivity across the UK.

In July 2024 Thurrock Council adopted a new Corporate Plan 2024-2029 – called 'A fresh start for Thurrock' – setting out how the council will operate over the next five years as it recovers and rebuilds trust with residents and communities. It sets a new purpose and future direction for the council as it works with its partners and local communities to best serve the people of Thurrock. The plan highlights 3 priorities:

- to be an enabling council by building strong and impactful partnerships to maximise the benefits for residents and our borough
- to focus on people to ensure Thurrock is a place where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and access the support they need
- to focus on place to achieve a strong and well-connected place that enables our borough, its diverse communities and businesses to thrive and grow

This new purpose – bringing together and engaging all who can make a contribution to supporting local people with their needs and to release opportunity – is fundamental to the principles of this new plan for culture.

Over the course of researching this plan, stakeholders and cultural sector pressed for a vision and mission to be defined, clearly articulating our ambition and intentions for culture. What is set out below has been tested with people we initially engaged with in 2022 and create a baseline view that can be explored further as the plan is adopted and implemented, to ensure it fully encapsulates where we are now and where we want to be.

As the plan moves towards implementation, its vision, mission, principles and values should be regularly reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of the sector and communities to align with emerging opportunities and challenges.



CULTURAL VISION

Through culture and creativity we will create a more vibrant, enriched, healthier and inclusive Thurrock for everyone.

CULTURAL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to deliver a cultural renaissance so everyone here has the opportunity to express their individual creativity and benefit from cultural activities, and Thurrock arts, culture and heritage will mean more to more people based on the principles of:

- Inclusivity: open to everyone
- Transparency: open and honest with everyone
- Sustainability: committed to fulfilling current and future benefits for everyone

This Strategy supports and echoes the new values and behaviours of the council's Corporate Plan of Accountability, Integrity, Collaborative, Impactful, Responsiveness and Adaptability and has a specific focus on:

IMPACTFUL

We will work collectively, encouraging communities to share their voice and perspective as we shape the cultural offer together and ensure our actions are co-designed and co-delivered.

COLLABORATIVE

We will all pull in the same direction, being collaborative and cooperative and in support of each other. We will act as enablers and champions, with shared ambitions and mutual respect.

ADAPTABILITY

We will understand the factors that could hold back our ambitions and be open to creative and innovative ways to overcome them. Our achievements will help us grow in our ambition.



Background

The launch of this plan follows research and focused conversations with residents, ‘creatives’ (i.e. those involved in the cultural sector), cultural organisations and other stakeholders, drawing in different voices and outlooks. In collating a range of views, insights and data, key themes have emerged. These themes will guide priorities for action that will be shaped and owned by everyone who has a stake in growing culture and creativity in Thurrock.

This strategy aligns with a number of local, regional and national strategies, recognising the need to establish continuity of outcomes and a shared ambition across departmental, organisational, political and locational boundaries.

The engagement and listening process highlighted the following areas for development, which should inform key priorities for action:

- There is a need to increase visibility and coherence across Thurrock’s cultural offer, with different forms of culture celebrated, amplified by improved marketing.
- Consistent amongst everyone we heard from was a desire for different places and spaces to be activated for creative and cultural use including buildings that are familiar to residents and close to where they live.
- People also told us they value existing creative and cultural places and spaces, such as the Thameside Theatre and Complex, which offer the opportunity to enjoy a range of experiences in a friendly, community focussed venue, including theatre productions, cinema, museum and heritage, library services and the arts.
- Greater recognition of the contribution culture can make towards healthy, happy and prosperous communities was considered vital, and should be backed up with collaborative and coordinated resources and investment, and shared ‘evidence of impact’ measures.
- People want to be more than audiences and consumers. Recognising this desire to be active participants, enabling individual creativity and opportunities for cultural co-production are important.
- Cultural leadership should be diverse and representative of Thurrock. Different perspectives and lived experiences foster cross-fertilisation, creativity and innovation.
- The Plan must also deliver real and tangible benefits for our children and young people, acknowledging that every child and young person should have opportunity to maximise their potential in life.



What do we mean by culture and creativity?

“Culture means many things to many people and is often used to refer to many different things. We use it to mean combined arts, heritage collections, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts.

By describing all of this work collectively as ‘culture’, rather than separately as ‘the arts’, ‘museums’ and ‘libraries’, we aim to be inclusive of the full breadth of activity that we support.

‘Creativity’ describes the process through which people apply their knowledge, skill and intuition to imagine, conceive, express or make something that wasn’t there before.

While creativity is present in all areas of life, we use it specifically to refer to the process of making, producing or participating in ‘culture’.”

*Let’s Create: Arts Council England’s
Strategy for Culture and Creativity*

(2020-2030)



Where are we now?

In 2022, the national development agency for culture – Arts Council England – identified Thurrock as a priority area. This designation recognises that historically, drawing down funds for culture has been limited compared to other areas. Increasing investment and support for culture and creating greater impact – now and for future generations – underpins this plan and will galvanise partners to drive forward change.

Thurrock's cultural partners have the opportunity to deliver change through culture and creativity. As outlined below, a number of significant cultural developments are underway and helping to grow our confidence in a culturally ambitious future. These developments have aligned at the same time, providing the opportunity and conditions to capitalise on new cultural capacity and optimism, and stimulate local cultural growth.

The first new development is the increase in organisations in receipt of regular funding from Arts Council England. Kinetika, Arts Outburst and CoDa Dance are part of a national portfolio of organisations who are considered leaders in their areas and are helping to develop the national arts and cultural ecology. Kinetika has been part of Arts Council England's national portfolio for many years, leading and pioneering outdoor arts experiences that have local, national and international impact, including being heavily involved in HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant in 2022. In joining the portfolio, Arts Outburst, which has been co-creating art and cultural projects with the people of Thurrock for almost 20 years, and CoDa Dance, an award-winning, socially driven, female- & disability-led dance company, delivering participatory projects in hospitals and communities for people that experience neurological conditions and disabilities, bring greater recognition to Thurrock's cultural leadership and ambition.

'Start Thurrock' launched in 2023 and is a borough-wide cultural programme with a difference: local people take the lead in deciding what creative and cultural experiences take place here. Start Thurrock is one of 39 Creative People and Places programmes in England, funded by Arts Council England, kick-starting a power-shift in how creative and cultural activity is selected, experienced and produced.

With residents in the driving seat, the programme is enabling inclusive and relevant cultural provision to flourish in our communities. Start Thurrock employs innovative approaches to community engagement which is leading to new audiences and participants in culture.



CoDa Dance Company, Dance East R&D 2021



Thurrock's heritage assets and maritime industry connect to a global narrative of trade and migration.

The Grade II* listed Tilbury Cruise Terminal was the arrival point for the famous Empire Windrush on 21 June 1948 and new investment from Heritage Lottery will anchor Tilbury's place in the nation's history and connect us to national conversations about our contemporary multicultural identity.

'Back on Track' began in 2023 and is supported by the Port of Tilbury and The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The programme will restore and reinvigorate Tilbury Riverside Station with a new heritage and creative-use space.

Contemporary community heritage and a celebration of the contributions of immigrants to our diverse society will be reflected in an associated programme of events, heritage interpretation and community grant making, underpinned by skills development and volunteering opportunities for local residents.

UK Shared Prosperity Funding has injected new capacity and resource for culture in Thurrock, with a project which aims to facilitate the coordination of creative and cultural opportunities, helping to anchor and weave culture across council services whilst also enabling cultural partnerships and provision to develop across the borough.

High House Production Park in Purfleet-on-Thames is a centre of excellence in the Creative and Cultural Industries, providing facilities and workspace for arts, theatre, film and digital production. High House Production Park tenants include the Royal Ballet and Opera (formerly Royal Opera House), ACME artist studios, South Essex College, the Backstage Centre and Thurrock Music Education Hub. A new site masterplan has been published, which will build a whole-site ecology and secure the long-term viability of the Park as a sustainable world-class centre for cultural production. As part of the ambition for the site, tenants and stakeholders are working together to drive up public engagement through site-specific events, cultural programming and enlivening underused spaces.

Finally, the Creative Estuary programme, funded by Arts Council England, has provided support and investment that is driving forward creative and economic growth, boosting production capacity and catalysing talent development. The programme has commissioned Thurrock cultural organisations and creatives to develop new work, strengthen creative practice and grow artist peer networks. Creative Estuary has been pivotal in helping to shape cultural infrastructure locally, co-investing in the production of a Thurrock Meanwhile Opportunities Strategy, which provides a framework and assessment tool to evaluate opportunities to bring underused buildings and land into temporary use for creative and mixed use, and culture-specific toolkits for planners and developers, creating a resource for cultural planning, a process that supports place making through considering what arts and cultural infrastructure can be secured through development, redevelopment and the land use planning process.

Collectively, the developments and progress highlighted above give us a strong foundation to build from and new optimism about our creative growth potential. Further examples of creative people, organisations and initiatives that are part of the cultural fabric of Thurrock are woven throughout this plan. Combined, there is a shared ambition and energy to deliver a cultural renaissance for Thurrock.



Port of Tilbury, Tilbury Riverside Station



Our Themes

Three distinct priorities for culture in Thurrock have emerged through research and engagement with local creative and cultural sector and communities and other stakeholders. A diverse range of people who live, work and are educated here have shared their views on what is important to them now, and for the future.

These themes will coalesce people and partners to work towards collective actions and priorities. We will continue to test these themes as we progress, ensuring they remain relevant and impactful. We will use these themes to influence local plans, policies and activities, informing where efforts and resources should be focused.

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

We will collectively place culture and creativity at the heart of everyday life

CULTURAL CAPACITY

We will collectively and ambitiously grow creative and cultural production, performance and presentation

CULTURAL CAPITAL

We will collectively harness the individual and collective benefits that culture and creativity can offer





CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

We will collectively place culture and creativity at the heart of everyday life.

Cultural Connections is our theme that recognises the transformative potential of culture and creativity in fostering meaningful connections amongst communities. By leveraging the richness and diversity of our individual and collective creativity, and celebrating Thurrock's cultures and traditions, we can create engaging and inclusive experiences that bring people together, spark conversations, and strengthen appreciation and respect for each other.

Shared cultural experiences that happen in familiar spaces and places make us feel good and proud about where we live. Where culture and creativity feels meaningful and relevant, it connects us and the communities of which we are part. Enhancing collective cultural experiences will better connect us and make culture and creativity mean more to more people.



Mark Massey, T100 Festival, Kenningtons Primary Academy

What's happening now?

Public events and festivals create a buzz and curiosity and make culture visible to many. Shared experiences are valued by residents and open up different artforms and cultures.

Large-scale public events in Thurrock grew in number and variety in 2023. Grays Get Creative Festival and Light Up Purfleet-on-Thames produced by Arts Outburst involved residents as audiences, artists, makers and producers. The intimate setting of Grays Town Park has played host to eclectic events including the inaugural Afro Food Festival which drew audiences from across Thurrock and beyond, and Proms in the Park treated audiences to an evening of classical music, led by the London Gala Orchestra. Celebrating its tenth year in 2024, T100 is a home-grown, Thurrock-wide 'walking, talking and making' festival which offers creative programmes that reflect Thurrock's people, places and stories. Thinking broadly about culture, residents are also proud of volunteer-led events such as the Karis May Darling Festival, Horndon Feast and Fayre, Tilbury Picnic in the Park and the Orsett Show.

Taking part in creative activity for pleasure, to learn new skills or for social benefit is important to residents and for some, a central part of their daily life.

Our research surfaced a breadth of creative activity on offer with music participation featuring highly across ages and backgrounds. Examples that people shared with us include Music Mondays at Grays Town Park Café, Open Mic at The Ship Pub, Thurrock Voices over 40s choir, the Thames Opera Company and Together Productions which uses singing to connect with residents who are seeking sanctuary in Thurrock, helping to create a sense of belonging and reduce isolation.

The Thameside Theatre offers a range of opportunities for diverse communities to come together and experience inclusive and exciting productions, events, learning and celebrations such as Black History Month, youth volunteering with Thameside Young Producers, activities aimed at residents who are differently abled, and support for Thurrock's LGBTQ+ community leading to the first Thurrock Pride event in 2024.

We also heard about where residents go to experience creative and culture locally and found that alongside traditional venues including the Thameside Theatre and Civic Hall, inspiring and exciting cultural experiences are presented in non-conventional spaces including churches, pubs, village halls, high streets and car parks.



Evewright ©, Tilbury Bridge Walkway of Memories

Community halls across the area are anchors for participatory activity and creative development programmes for children and young people. An array of dance schools, music and art classes provide doorstep opportunities for young people that are valued by families and local communities. Organisations that encourage 'everyday creativity' and inclusive communities for young people include Temple Springs and Creative Blast Performing Arts Academy. Both organisations draw in children from an early age and support them to develop creative expression, skills and confidence through to late teens.



Temple Springs, Jembe Drummers

Thurrock has an extraordinary history and heritage, which is well respected and celebrated. It is a source of local pride that helps people connect their past with Thurrock's modern-day identity. Tilbury's connections to the Empire Windrush are well documented and have provided creative inspiration for artists and cultural organisations who are based in Thurrock. The 'Tilbury Bridge Walkway of Memories' is an art and sound installation dedicated to the people of the Windrush generation, created by multi-disciplinary artist Evewright, whose work makes space for Black British stories to exist and thrive.

Further east along the Thames riverfront stand two buildings that have played a part in protecting the nation and are now heritage assets. Tilbury Fort, where Queen Elizabeth I's troops were when she rallied them against the Spanish Armada, is preserved by English Heritage. Nearby Coalhouse Fort, built to ward against invasion in the 1800s and in WW2, is set in acres of ecologically significant parkland and has been the location for cultural events and experiences that bring the building's history to life.

Thurrock's heritage offer is broader than its connections to the Thames with unique insights into our social history held in collections at the Thurrock Museum and Bata Heritage Centre. The Purfleet Heritage and Military Centre provides important insights into Thurrock's military history and has become a focal point for the UK's Gurkha community, and a national celebratory festival was held in the area in 2024.

'Arts Thurrock' is the borough's umbrella organisation for the voluntary and amateur sector and promotes and protects heritage crafts alongside performing and visual artforms. A proactive and enthusiastic network of volunteers keep these connections to our past alive through regular open days and special commemorative events, which populate the local cultural calendar and are well supported.



Spotlight on

AFRO FOOD FESTIVAL



U-Turnships CIC, Afro Food Festival

When the Directors of local social enterprise U-turnships CIC came up with the idea of Thurrock's Afro Food Festival, their vision was simple: share African and Caribbean cultures to help break down cultural barriers and create more community unity.

The inaugural festival in 2023 – produced by Joseph, Richard & Georgina (Directors of U-turnships CIC) - offered a live music stage with a lineup of 20 music acts ranging from Afrobeats to Dancehall, food stalls covering global cuisines plus art, drama and music workshops.

The festival drew audiences from across Thurrock, London and the east region. The event also provided a stepping stone for acts to perform at other local events including Thurrock's Community Big Lunches, Grays Music Day and the finale of the T100 Festival.

Audiences for Afro Food Festival tripled in 2024, with 2,500 people attending. The 2024 festival, was realised through collaborative partnership working and funding, and included a training programme for young people that supported them to take leading roles in the event production, along with the finale parade and celebration of the 2024 Thurrock T100 festival.

Data and Stats

Arts and culture help tackle social injustice.

Arts Council England Why art and culture matters
(artscouncil.org.uk/make-case-creativity-and-culture/why-art-and-culture-matters)

86% of Creative, People and Places audiences haven't regularly engaged with arts before.

CPP Meta Evaluation Report 2019

CULTURAL CAPACITY

We will collectively and ambitiously grow creative and cultural production, performance and presentation.

Cultural Capacity is our theme that focuses on how we will work together to support the creative and cultural sector to build on existing strengths, fortify the talent pipeline and stimulate ambition and growth.

Creative and cultural businesses, individuals and organisations play a vital role in society, contributing to dynamic places and community resilience. It is a sector that thrives on the capacity of talented individuals and organisations. By fostering collaboration, developing talent, and harnessing digital innovations we will create a healthy ecosystem that nurtures creatives at all stages of their career.

Recognising the importance of capacity building and providing support for creatives and cultural organisations, we will equip the sector with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world. We will recognise the significance of mentorship and networking opportunities, connecting established artists with those just starting out, to facilitate inspiration and progression.

Thurrock's creative and cultural sector are committed and passionate to growing our cultural potential. By investing in the sector, providing access to space, resources and opportunities, and creating a supportive and enabling environment we can build a dynamic and sustainable sector that celebrates diversity, fosters creativity, and champions cultural expression.





Kinetika, Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant, 2022

What's happening now?

The bold Creative Estuary programme uses culture as a catalyst for growth, innovation and leadership and has targeted investment and support towards creatives and cultural organisations in Thurrock. Often in partnership with Thurrock Council (Economic Development), Creative Estuary has enabled Thurrock artists, producers and creative practitioners to create work, develop their practice and foster new creative networks.

Creative Estuary supported visual artist Lata Upadhyaya to co-create 'Past, Present and Future' with residents in Purfleet-on-Thames, capturing their memories and hopes for the future. The commission supported Lata to experiment with AR technology to locate digital artworks in a public space. The commission also enabled Lata to mentor a local emerging artist, helping to develop talent and grow creative practice in Thurrock.

Kinetika's pioneering participation work, rooted in carnival arts, is co-created with communities in Thurrock and across the world. The company creates opportunities for Thurrock artists, volunteers and communities to design and deliver projects on their doorstep and for world class events including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant in central London. Kinetika's work excites and challenges and is recognised internationally, drawing positive attention to Thurrock and raising aspiration amongst communities and creatives.

In 2023, the Thurrock Film Festival pivoted to become Thurrock Screen Culture Festival, responding to evolving digital media and expanding its international film screenings to include gaming and digital art, as well as providing a platform for young filmmakers and creatives. The festival invited audiences to join online, or in person across three sites in Grays Town Centre including South Essex College, Café Cinema and Park Cinema.



Thurrock is Royal Ballet and Opera's second home. From its purpose-built production workshops at High House Production Park, scenery and costumes destined for the Covent Garden stage are fabricated and crafted. The production workshops also play host to Level 3 apprenticeships in costume making, scenic carpentry and metalwork, offering doorstep opportunities for Thurrock's education leavers to access entry roles into the cultural sector.

Royal Ballet and Opera's presence and investment in Thurrock has catalysed new activity and enterprise and drawn high-quality creatives and cultural organisations to work here. Thurrock-based Kite Spirit Textile Group emerged from a Royal Ballet and Opera supported-event and the unique Thurrock Trailblazer programme – the central pillar of Royal Ballet and Opera's education work in Thurrock – has enabled 80 cultural organisations from across the country to work here, in our schools, supporting cultural education leadership and creative teaching and learning.

Pathways to further and higher education in creative subjects are available in Thurrock and offer unique qualifications that respond to industry needs.

A one-of-its-kind degree in Costume Construction is a collaboration between Royal Ballet and Opera, South Essex College (SEC) and University of the Arts London (UAL). The SEC and UAL partnership extends to a Hair and Make Up Design for TV, film and stage qualification and a Performing Arts course that supports students to explore a range of onward employment routes into the sector.

USP College in Grays provides arts and graphics students with real world experience including opportunities to work on live briefs from industry.

Established over ten years ago, Thurrock Young Producers (TYP) project has encouraged young people aged 8-25 to get involved in opportunities to gain experience in theatre event and project management. From their base in the Thameside Theatre, TYP supports members to gain practical skills and working knowledge of producing shows and an insight into the technical side of theatre including lighting, design, sound and stage management.

Thurrock is also home to Performers College, a powerhouse in the performing arts industry and springboard for performers entering the profession. From modest beginnings in Corringham (where the first cohort of students trained from a community hall), the purpose-built Performers College boasts some of the finest facilities in the country and offers multiple further and higher education accredited courses for students who come from across the world to study here.

Grass-roots organisations and alternative education settings also play their part in supporting young people to develop their creativity and routes into employment. Inspire Hub and enterprises including Quest Music and Eazee Learning provide a space for young people to hone contemporary music forms and be inspired by their peers. Evolve Youth Academy offers courses and Arts Award qualifications in podcasting, photography and videography for young people not in mainstream education.



Rachel Cherry, Thames Opera Company



Rachel Cherry, Together Productions



Spotlight on K&B DESIGNS



K&B Design are Kirsty Langston and Brittany Abbott-Trangmar, a mural and graphic design duo whose custom hand-painted pieces can be seen locally and across London and the South East.

Friends since attending Stifford Clays Primary, Kirsty and Brittany studied together at USP College (Palmer's Campus) and Ravensbourne University. K&B Design was launched in their final year at Ravensbourne during the Covid 19 national lockdown.

K&B's work includes community projects such as the Mental Health Awareness mural at the Cross Keys Pub in Chadwell-St-Mary on behalf of Thurrock and Brentwood Mind.

Corporate clients include EE, Samsung, Coca Cola, River Island and Channel 4.



K&B Designs

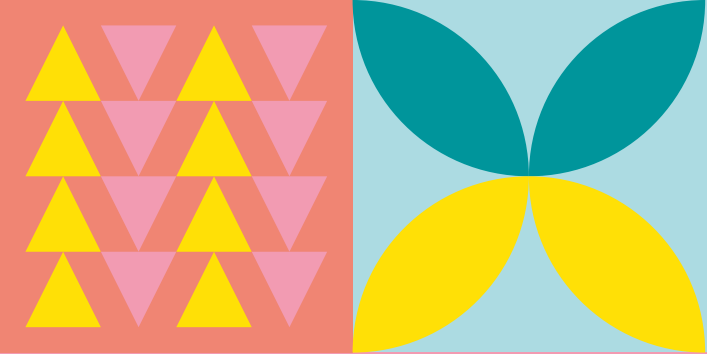
DATA AND STATS

Within the Thames Estuary region, 96% of creative business are microbusinesses and almost half creative workers are freelance.

More than a Place. Research report commissioned by ASELA. 2021

Growth in creative jobs is growing at three times the UK average.

More than a Place. Research report commissioned by ASELA. 2021



CULTURAL CAPITAL

We will collectively harness the individual and collective benefits that culture and creativity can offer.

Cultural Capital is our commitment to maximising the value of culture to deliver positive outcomes that enhance place, improve quality of life and cultivate a more prosperous and inclusive future for all.

Culture can provide the glue between communities and bring collective social, health and economic benefits. Strengthening opportunities for people to come together and take part in culture is vitally important to residents, stakeholders and advocates for culture in Thurrock who recognise that vibrant, creative communities help reduce inequalities and improve overall quality of life.

It is also recognised that culture can help shape places, giving them a distinctiveness and making us feel proud of where we live. In Thurrock, we want to ensure our towns and villages – from the industrial riverside to urban centres and outlying rural areas – are part of a vibrant cultural landscape, where neighbourhoods are enhanced and revitalised through cultural activity and production.

Beyond its inherent value in enriching lives, culture and creativity play a key role in stimulating local economies. Culturally vibrant places create positive ripple effects including generating employment opportunities, attracting business and inward investment and fostering innovation. We will drive economic development and progress, by positioning culture and the creative industries as a key component for delivering sustainable and inclusive growth, and catalyse new cross-sector partnerships between culture, public health, industry and education.



M Johnson, T100 Festival, Tilbury Town Station



NMC Creative, Creative Blast Performing Arts Academy

What's happening now?

Thurrock is situated in the Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC), a significant programme backed by the Mayor of London, to create a world-class centre for creative and cultural production: leading global innovation, creating new jobs, developing local talent and supporting the rapid growth of the creative economy. Research has shown that the Thames Estuary Production Corridor has the potential to create 50,000 jobs and generate £3.7bn for the UK economy, becoming the UK's largest concentration of creative production. Thurrock's partnership with Creative Estuary – backed by TEPC – will strengthen over the life of this Plan, with phase 2 of the Creative Estuary programme targeting Thurrock as a priority area for support.

Regeneration programmes including the Towns Fund initiatives in Tilbury and Grays are incorporating culture within their vision for vibrant and healthy towns and recognising that cultural hubs and co-locating culture within civic infrastructure attracts more footfall, brings greater community participation and breathes life into the public realm. Furthermore, there is interest in opening up spaces for temporary or 'meanwhile' use to support the transitional development of places. Activating sites for creative use and cultural programming, provides opportunities for testing ideas and concepts for viable creative and cultural uses, which may be incorporated in future place-based developments.

For our young people, the Thurrock Trailblazer programme offers rich arts-based learning led by world-class artists and is proven to accelerate student's development. Thurrock Trailblazer is a unique schools programme led by Royal Ballet and Opera that has benefitted our children and young people since 2014. In that time, the programme has supported 60 Thurrock schools and enabled 100,000 student engagements.



Spotlight on CODA DANCE

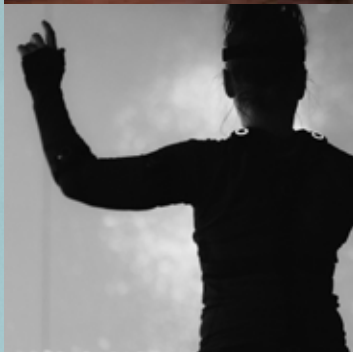


CoDa Dance are industry leading experts in dance for access and inclusion, health, access and digital dance.

CoDa specialise in dance and neurology and have delivered vital dance in health work since 2013, providing movement rehabilitation for people with MS, Acquired Brain Injury and other neurological disabilities.



In recent years the company has expanded its work to develop digitally immersive dance practice in extended realities, underpinned by pioneering participatory methodology. The result is creative work co-created with communities through personal testimony, movement and brain waves.



CoDa's digital and virtual approach has grown its audiences and utilising new creative technologies has deepened the significance, accessibility and impact of the company's work.

CoDa Dance is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.



CoDa Dance, RGB Snapshot

DATA AND STATS

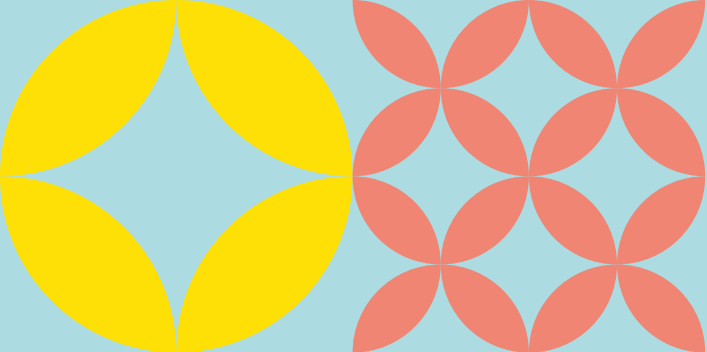
Arts and culture can have a positive effect on both mental and physical health

What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review. Fancourt and Finn 2019

Children who study the arts do better; they are more likely to attend university, and are more employable

Cultural Learning Alliance, Briefing Paper No. 4: The Arts in Schools – Why the Arts Matter in our education system, 2018

Creative Industries contribute £115.9bn (5.9%) to the UK GVA
More than a Place. Research report commissioned by ASELA. 2021



WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

Looking forward, there are a number of actions that surfaced through the discussions, research and engagement behind this Plan. Together they form the foundations for a 4-year action plan (see Appendix 1) that will create the building blocks and a strong evidence base for 5-10 year visioning, planning and prioritisation.

Cultural Offer

There is real opportunity to increase community connections by growing and diversifying Thurrock's cultural offer. Data from Arts Council England tells us that cultural engagement levels are low in Thurrock with 64% of local people not engaging frequently. Start Thurrock is an Action Research programme, with ongoing, built-in evaluation activity and far-reaching data collection and is beginning to make a positive difference in growing audiences and enabling doorstep opportunities to experience culture. Early evaluation suggests, activating grass roots cultural leadership and programming in non-traditional spaces which is co-created and reflective of resident's interests is helping culture to feel meaningful and relevant. Start Thurrock has the potential to have a catalysing effect, leveraging new investment and opportunities for Thurrock's creative and cultural sector to test new approaches to cultural engagement and co-production. Start Thurrock is anticipated to be operational until 2029, covering the lifespan of the Plan for Culture. The learning from Start Thurrock is rich and as part of the action plan will be shared widely across stakeholders and used to inform programming and engagement approaches.

Thurrock has the potential to elevate its events and festivals offer to meet public demand. A coherent and coordinated annual calendar will be co-planned by event organisers and producers. This will raise the profile of the breadth of public engagement activity and offer excellent opportunities for cross-promotion.

Establishing an events and festival steering group will help to facilitate this and enable partners to explore resource sharing. For example, Start Thurrock in partnership with Thurrock CVS is developing a pool of volunteer Community Researchers to support data collection and evaluation at events. The intention is that the Community Researchers will receive interesting opportunities and incentives across Thurrock – not just those provided by Start Thurrock. Similarly, Arts Outburst is training event assistant volunteers to support its outdoor work, and there could be potential to expand the programme more widely. Volunteering opportunities also feature within the Back on Track heritage programme led by Tilbury on the Thames Trust.



Galvanizing a collective voice through this steering group will enable improved marketing, that reaches broad audiences. Residents told us that the relevance and quality of marketing was a deciding factor in whether they felt a cultural experience was 'for them'. Despite the efforts of event and festival organisers to grow and diversify audiences, marketing materials do not always promote inclusivity or accessibility. Promotional messages and engagement materials should be market and audience tested at design stage, supported by the events and festivals steering group.



Lee Jarvis, Creative Blast Performing Arts Academy

Talent Pipeline

The need to support the talent pipeline and create the conditions and environment for creative growth is essential for a thriving cultural ecology. Recent National Lottery Project Grant (NLPG) data from Arts Council England indicates that Thurrock creatives and cultural organisations are not finding enough local opportunities to make work with 77.1% of grants awarded to organisations and artists in Thurrock between 2021 and 2023 supporting activity taking place outside Thurrock. Equally and strikingly, 100% of grants given to individual artists and creative practitioners also supported creative work outside our area. The figures back up anecdotal feedback that creatives are working elsewhere where opportunities are easier to come by.

Stopping the drain of talent and ideas from Thurrock is urgent and this plan for culture is our opportunity to secure our creative future by investing in our creative workforce, providing space and support systems that allow them to springboard their place in growing a vibrant local creative economy.

Space

The recent More than a Place Report, commissioned by the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA), looked at what the local creative and cultural sector needs to thrive. The report identified that for Thurrock creatives there are high levels of need for workspace (75% of respondents) and project space (88% of respondents). Demand for affordable and flexible space for working, sharing, rehearsing, exhibiting and leading participatory/community-based activity outstrips supply. And yet, there are tangible opportunities within Thurrock to open up spaces for creative and community use and the partners in place who can help this happen, starting with an approach to activating meanwhile use that is underpinned with seed funds for demonstrator projects from Creative Estuary and Start Thurrock. Furthermore, there may be additional support and investment in temporary and meanwhile-use through Towns Fund in Grays and Tilbury.

Thurrock's Meanwhile Opportunities Strategy - produced in 2023 – is underpinned by this plan and provides a framework and assessment tool to evaluate opportunities to bring underused buildings and land into temporary use for creative and mixed use, helping to enliven spaces and nurture creative clusters. By activating sites for creative use and cultural programming, our sector can test ideas and concepts, growing its capacity and connectivity.



There is an urgency to bring forward flexible and affordable space for creative use. The call from the creative and cultural sector about the need for space has been consistent across recent consultations including the ASELA report and local 'supply and demand' studies. Delaying addressing this risks talent being stifled and creatives not reaching their full potential. Furthermore, the conditions for access and usage of space should be straight-forward and allow for experimentation and risk-taking; the climate is not conducive to tying creatives into long-term commitments. Securing building-based growth and future-proofing audiences and revenue streams to sustain long-term viability is a challenge in Thurrock.

People have told us, through recent consultations, that supporting and growing local, community focussed places and spaces, which deliver a variety of creative and cultural services 'under one roof', such as the Thameside Complex, are important to them because of the long-standing positive impact they have on the communities they serve.

Environmental Sustainability

There is widespread recognition that urgent action is needed to tackle climate change, and in response to this call to action, Thurrock Council declared a climate emergency in October 2019. Environmental responsibility is embedded in Art Council England's 10-year investment strategy (2020-2030) which sets out an expectation that cultural organisations will strengthen their commitment to the environment and promote the need for environmental responsibility within the communities in which they work. Thurrock's cultural sector will be encouraged to engage in activities to reduce their carbon emissions and to support the sector and communities to reduce their energy usage through the delivery of eco-conscious and sustainability themed events, activities and advocacy.

Sector Support

Creative workspaces are environments that enable networking. Investing in networks breeds knowledge exchanges, new ideas and strengthens support systems amongst creatives, particularly freelancers. Creative networks in Thurrock should be nurtured with new networks formed around creative clusters and purposeful networks established for young, emerging creatives.

Various studies including the recent *Place Matters: Local Approaches to Creative Industries* state that growing creative skills is the largest unfulfilled priority for sector development. Capacity building to develop expertise and knowledge will support Thurrock's sector to grow and a suite of sector support opportunities should be developed through a co-planning and co-investment approach. Harnessing the power of technology and digital platforms should be given particular focus in capacity building. Equipping the sector with the skills and knowledge to embrace technological developments will grow the resilience and dynamism of the sector and enhance the accessibility of cultural content.



Kinetika and Kristian Buus, Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant, 2022



Resources

This plan highlights examples of positive outcomes and success stories, which demonstrate that it is possible to make a difference at a local level, see sustainable growth and provide optimism. In Thurrock, support for strengthening the value and impact of culture is growing across stakeholders, and the public and private sector, which is helping to lever new partnerships and diversify investment in culture. Nevertheless, it is clear that systems are straining, budgets are drained and priorities are stretched nationally.

Thurrock Council has a new operating model and as such, will act as an enabler and facilitator of this Plan, rather than a commissioner or direct deliverer. The Council has committed to supporting the coordination of creative and cultural opportunities, utilising funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, working with partners to shape future actions that will realise this plan.

With a challenging and competitive climate for drawing public and private investment, a collaborative approach to fundraising tempered with realistic resource modelling will be needed. Coordinated and collaborative bids and smarter targeting of resources will be underpinned by robust and shared evaluation frameworks, drawing on the collective input from the Cultural Leaders Group, which can create aggregated evidence of impact that will grow confidence in stakeholders and investors.

Investing in experimentation and emerging talent, drives innovation and expansion. Where funds exist in the Thurrock-wide system there needs to be a joining of forces and resources to create a 'test bed' fund that catalyses new creative ideas, strengthens practice and raises ambition. The advance of digital technologies and how they support cultural innovation and content, should not be overlooked or downplayed in any future-facing seed funding and action planning.

Finally, for the creative ecosystem to thrive, support and opportunity should be balanced and diverse. More equality of opportunity across the whole sector, avoiding an over reliance on a few people or organisations (who are already stretched) would enable a range of creatives – at all stages of development – to contribute and have the opportunity to grow. Inviting creatives and cultural organisations into Thurrock could encourage new ideas but should be approached strategically, and as a way of growing a broad, place-based offer and not transplanting in projects developed for elsewhere.

Cultural Compact

Ensuring sustainability of Thurrock's ambition to work collaboratively, with shared creative and cultural ambition and goals, the development of a Cultural Compact will be explored, drawing on lessons learned from the Arts Council England and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Cultural Compact 2019 programme, which supported the creation of 20 Cultural Compacts across the UK. Establishing a Cultural Compact for Thurrock will create a partnership, which includes business, local authority, health, education and the cultural sector, to support local arts and culture by increasing connectivity between the cultural sector and broader local aspirations.



Young People

Engaging with young people in the development of this plan revealed divergent pathways into creative employment. Traditional routes are suitable for some young people, but for many we spoke to, there is limited flex or 'real life' experience in post 16 options. In addition, some young people told us that support systems were not visible or relevant to pursuing creative work. We heard of DIY approaches involving social media, informal learning and accessing mentors and role models 'beyond the norm' were helping young people to progress and find exciting opportunities. Linked to this, some young people feel deterred from 'established' training and work experience models which feel narrow and incompatible to how they want to work and earn. Young people are motivated by ideas and opportunistic experiences and are happy to move laterally across roles and jobs, rather than taking a linear route.

We also heard that young people do not always see themselves, their cultures or interests represented in the local cultural offer. There is limited representation to allow young people to feel that the sector or artforms are open to them.

Finally, we found that formal post 16 creative qualifications, apprenticeships and work experience available in Thurrock fell below some young people's radar. Greater visibility and prominence of doorstep creative career pathways is needed.

If Thurrock is to grow the talent pipeline, by nurturing and retaining a diverse and ambitious workforce, then young people's needs, interests and support systems must be at the heart of this plan for culture.



Temple Springs, Keyboard tuition

Education

Without any statutory arts education as part of the current school curriculum, the plan for culture must recognise the need to stimulate opportunities to benefit our young people's future.

The plan must find a way to retain and build on recent cultural education infrastructure investment – including Thurrock Trailblazer, Thurrock's Cultural Education Partnership and Music Education Hub - to sustain the benefits and energy of local leaders and champions of cultural opportunity for children and young people.

There are also a number of local cultural organisations who have received support and funding in recent years from Arts Council England's Bridge programme to develop their learning offer. For organisations including Complete Commedia Company, Rendered Retina, Thurrock Museum, Everwright Foundation and Temple Springs, dedicated support, training and resource from the Bridge was catalytic in strengthening and sustaining each organisation's schools and education work. The Bridge programme has come to a close, leaving no strategic support or funds for organisations and partnerships. A dedicated networking group for cultural learning could support local organisations and education providers to stay informed of current practice and opportunities, and Royal Ballet and Opera (which successfully led the Bridge programme in our region until 2023) may be well placed to convene informal networking locally.



Economic Growth

For centuries, Thurrock has never stood still. A constant ebb and flow of goods, ideas and people through time and throughout the world have sparked innovation, social change and cultural exchange. Thurrock's location as the fulcrum of the Thames Estuary – Gateway to the Globe – underpins major investments in regeneration, infrastructure and industry, representing a watershed moment to transform expectations for living, working, learning and socialising here.

As yet, the trickledown effects of industrial investment including the Thames Freeport, are not clearly articulated or tangible in relation to creative growth, which should be addressed as the plan for culture beds in, and the ambitions are profiled with business and industry leaders.

Cultural Hubs

A focus on driving up a cohesive cultural offer in Grays, Tilbury and Purfleet-on-Thames and fostering creative clusters in these locations would create dividends for the whole of Thurrock. Cultural hubs contribute towards place-making, integrated and active communities and ultimately, improved quality of life.

Major regeneration and projected housing growth in and around these locations, underpinned by the emerging Thurrock Local Plan, will change the shape of these areas and a joined-up, integrated and strategic approach to growing cultural potential will be needed for success, along with the following principles and actions:

- A strong vision in each place, that plays to local cultural strengths and distinctiveness will increase the visibility of different forms of culture and more pride in place.
- Animating and energising different places and spaces will unlock community assets, support social networks to develop and increase community participation and civic engagement.
- Establishing equal access to these spaces for all residents supports inclusion, promotes wellbeing, and reduces marginalisation.
- Creating integrated spaces that foster collaboration and opportunity to connect with and build the resilience of local communities.
- Nurturing and supporting creative micro-clusters, providing seed funds and creating the conditions for culture to take root, will accelerate creative sector growth.
- Ground up approaches to cultural development with people at the centre will support 'buy in', longevity and more resilient communities.

Leadership

Finally, positioning this plan to leverage the benefits and raise the profile of culture should be through a strategic cultural leadership group, with clear goals and cross-sector representation. It is acknowledged that Thurrock has a number of steering groups and committees already established to support the development and delivery of creative and cultural activities, however there is a need for an overarching group build on these existing networks, to establish a clear direction, enable collaboration and amplify positive outcomes. By aligning with cross-cutting agendas, the role culture plays in local areas will be amplified and the potential to harness new, additional resources will be greater.

Membership to a cultural leadership group should be diverse, inclusive and representative of Thurrock communities. Different experiences, knowledge and interests feed new ideas, cross-fertilisation and crucially, challenge assumptions. Where new members may not have the skills to fulfil a leadership role, orientation and training should be offered.

APPENDIX 1 - ACTION PLAN

This action plan articulates the first steps towards the culturally-ambitious future that residents and stakeholders want. It is the solid groundwork that builds collective capacity and commitment towards the longer-term vision for transformational change.

Several actions can be achieved without new or additional resource and instead, point towards better coordination, smarter allocation of existing resources and strong cooperation and collaboration between partners and stakeholders.

Thurrock Council has a new operating model and as such, will act as an enabler and facilitator of this plan, rather than a commissioner or direct deliverer. The plan will be owned and driven by the cultural sector in Thurrock.

THEME	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	LEAD
Governance	Governance of this Plan is overseen by a Cultural Leadership Group that is diverse, inclusive and representative of Thurrock, ensuring resident voice and co-creation informs creative and cultural activity, which will report to the portfolio holder for Community Partnerships	Set up Cultural Leadership Group, agree terms of reference and role and responsibilities of membership. Begin monitoring of Action Plan and development of the Implementation Plan.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
	A Thurrock-wide evidence of impact framework is developed and adopted, including a focus on championing children and young people	Develop and adopt a Thurrock-wide evidence of impact framework for cultural and creative sector and activities.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
	Ensure resident voice and co-creation informs action, all programmes and activities are funded and sustainable, with a clear plan for resourcing.	Develop and agree a collaborative approach to fundraising and co-production.	Cultural Leaders Group
Cultural Connections - We will collectively place culture and creativity at the heart of everyday life	Coordinate and raise the profile and reach of the local offer, improve marketing and identify resource sharing.	Establish a Festival and Events Steering Group (as a sub group of the Cultural Leadership Group)	Cultural Leaders Group
	Actively enable creative and cultural activity in spaces.	Research, audit and map spaces and prioritise those ready for access and use. Open up new places and spaces for culture.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
	Take a coordinated and strategic approach towards cultural volunteering,	Create a central pool of volunteers who can support the full, local offer.	Cultural Leaders Group
	Catalyse new cross-sector partnerships between culture, public health, industry and education	Build on existing relationships to champion the benefits in taking a collaborative approach to maximise the positive impact of culture and creativity.	Cultural Leaders Group



THEME	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	LEAD
Cultural Capacity - We will collectively ambitiously grow creative and cultural production, performance and presentation	Support innovation and risk-tasking in the creative and cultural sector	Establish a seed fund for Thurrock's creative and cultural sector.	Cultural Leaders Group
	Simplify access and use of space, and actively seek out demonstrator projects and a pipeline of opportunities.	Build support and partnerships to activate Thurrock's Meanwhile Opportunities Strategy.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
	Establish (or strengthen existing) place-based cultural groups in Grays, Tilbury and Purfleet-on-Thames to ensure the local offer is coherent and creative clusters can flourish.	Augment place-based leadership groups with purposeful creative networks including dedicated forums for emerging artists and cultural learning.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
	Equip the sector with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world, supporting them to understanding and identify external funding opportunities.	Develop a capacity building plan, which responds to sector needs and includes a suite of professional development opportunities.	Cultural Leaders Group
	Drive economic development by positioning culture and the creative industries as a key component for delivering sustainable and inclusive growth.	Champion culture and the creative industries through local planning policies and the emerging Local Plan and Economic Development Strategy.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
Cultural Capital - We will collectively harness the individual and collective benefits that culture and creativity can offer.	Identify shared objectives and outcomes and where funds could be aligned and pooled.	Map local investment programmes.	Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture
	Share findings widely and act on insights to strengthen career support.	Build new understanding of post 16 attitudes towards creative and culture and the routes into them, including informal skills development opportunities.	Cultural Leaders Group
	Develop open exchanges with business, industry and education	Build better collective understanding and support that grows cultural opportunity.	Cultural Leaders Group



List of consultations and engagement

One to One meetings

Brian Warrens, The Backstage Centre
Ali Pretty, Kinetika
Hi Ching, Anglo Asiatic Arts & Heritage Alliance
and Thurrock Screen Culture Festival
Ionie Richards, Evewright Studio
Dorion Quest, Quest Music Services
Lucy Harris, Tilbury on the Thames Trust
Vic Gray, Arts Thurrock
Daryl Branch, Arts Outburst and Creative Blast
Neil Woodbridge, Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions

Thurrock National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs)

Arts Outburst
Kinetika People
CoDa Dance Company

Cultural Sector Workshop

Emily Moon, Cece Luna Costume & Arts
Carole Moon, Cece Luna Costume & Arts
Katie Beadle, Start Thurrock
(Creative People and Places)
Jeremy Haneman, Together Productions
Alex Godfree, Together Productions
Michelle Savage, Thurrock Museum

Education partners

Lansdowne Primary, Tilbury
Beacon Hill Special
Olive Academy Alternative Provision
Early Years Provider Forum
Local Cultural Education Partnership members:

- Royal Ballet and Opera (formerly Royal Opera House)
- South Essex College – The Backstage Centre
- Hathaway Academy, Grays
- Harris Academy, Chafford Hundred
- The Gateway Academy, Tilbury
- Beacon Hill Academy, South Ockendon
- Thurrock Music Service
- Thurrock Council

Key Stakeholders

Arts Council England
Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA)

Consultations

Grays Central Library and Thurrock Museum
Delivery of Cultural events and activities in Grays and the wider borough
Your Place, Your Voice



Glossary

Arts Council England

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences to enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries - from theatre to digital art - reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. It is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

artscouncil.org.uk/

Arts Thurrock

Arts Thurrock is an umbrella organisation for voluntary arts groups from all parts of Thurrock. It administers grant funding on behalf of Thurrock Council and other funders in Thurrock.

[@Arts Thurrock \(facebook\)](https://www.facebook.com/ArtsThurrock)

Back on Track

Back on Track is the name of a National Lottery Heritage Fund project created by Tilbury on the Thames Trust. The project secured £340,050 from the Fund to develop proposals and have been awarded over £4.4m from National Lottery Heritage Fund reinvigorate the Tilbury Riverside Station.

tott.org.uk/back-on-track/

Creative Estuary

Creative Estuary is part of the Government endorsed Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC) project, initiated by the South East Creative Economy Network and Greater London Authority. TEPC was recognised as a key part of the Estuary's future in the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission report, attracting investment from both The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Creative Estuary is driving forward the creative and economic evolution of this unique region, unlocking its potential both as an international production hub and a collaborative, inspiring place to work for a new generation of creative talent.

creativeestuary.com/about-us/the-creative-estuary-initiative/

Creative People and Places

Creative People and Places, delivered by Arts Council England and funded by The National Lottery, which focuses on parts of the country where involvement in creativity and culture is significantly below the national average. It funds partners in local areas to empower residents to decide what kind of creative activity they want to experience on their doorstep.

artscouncil.org.uk/creative-people-and-places-0

Start Thurrock

Start Thurrock is a 'Creative People and Places' programme funded by Arts Council England and delivered in partnership by Tilbury on the Thames Trust, Thurrock CVS, Royal Ballet and Opera, Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions and Thurrock Council. They work in partnership with the people of Thurrock to help them choose, produce and take part in brilliant arts and cultural experiences on their doorstep.

startthurrock.org/



Glossary continued

T100

T100 is an annual walking, talking and making festival, delivered by Kinetika, that encourages multiple stories to surface in Thurrock and the surrounding areas. The festival has developed in collaboration with a wide range of local partners including Thurrock Council, Thurrock CVS, The Complete Commedia Company, Thurrock International Celebration of Culture (TICC), Tilbury On The Thames Trust, Port of Tilbury, One Community Trust, Royal Opera House (ROH) Thurrock Trailblazers, High House Production Park and Purfleet Centre Regeneration Ltd (PCRL).

kinetika.co.uk/portfolio/t100-walking-festival

Thames Estuary Production Corridor

The Thames Estuary Production Corridor is a significant programme which unites east London, North Ken and South Essex to create a world-class centre for creative and cultural production: leading global innovation, creating new jobs, developing local talent and supporting the rapid growth of the creative economy.

thamesestuary.org.uk/investment-opportunities/creative-sector-investment/

Thurrock Meanwhile Opportunities Strategy

This Thurrock Meanwhile Opportunities Strategy, funded by Creative Estuary, was created to enable Thurrock Council and its partners to bring underused buildings and land into creative and mixed use across the borough through temporary use.

Thurrock Trailblazer

Thurrock Trailblazer is an innovative programme of high quality arts and cultural activities, visits to heritage sites and specialist teacher training, that boosts creative learning in schools and accelerates pupils' development. In partnership with Thurrock Council, the Royal Ballet and Opera is working with local, regional and national arts organisations to deliver cultural education in Thurrock.

rbo.org.uk/schools/resource/thurrock-trailblazer

Towns Fund

The government's Towns Fund is a £3.6billion scheme to help improve the towns in which we live, work and enjoy being. It is set to boost jobs and grow the local economy.

gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-prospectus

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) a UK government programme providing local authorities funding for communities, places, businesses, people and skills.

gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus