

Medway Cultural Strategy Interim Consultation

GJG Consultancy, May 2020

GJG Consultancy is working with the Medway Cultural Partnership and Medway Council to co-develop a new Medway Cultural Strategy. This document is an overview of the Vision, Values and Themes underpinning the Strategy - an outcome of the consultation to date.

Why a cultural strategy?

A cultural strategy should be aspirational – speaking to a broad vision and reflecting the highest hopes for any place and its people.

The new 2020-2030 strategy will show how important culture is to Medway's future, and give everyone the opportunity to take part in, or contribute to, its cultural life.

Our approach is to help co-create a co-delivered and holistic vision for culture in a place. It links the cultural sector to broader issues (for example, wellbeing) that intersect with the aims of other organisations and agencies.

In the short term, our Cultural Strategy will shape opinions and behaviours, and lead to social and economic benefits. Longer term, it should look to transform Medway.

Have your say

Individuals, please tell us what you think, complete our [Online Survey](#).

Organisations, please [read the full version of the Report](#).

To find out more please visit medwayculturalstrategy.co.uk.

The consultation so far

As part of the consultation, GJG Consultancy has spoken with a range of people in Medway.

These include:

- Residents representing many different communities – from pupils at Rochester Grammar to MACA's Senior Domino Group, Dragon co-working lunch club to the knitting circle at Walderslade Library.
- Around 70 stakeholders from sectors such as cultural, local government, health, voluntary and community, education, visitor economy, regeneration and economic development.
- Over 150 people at the Open Space session in January 2020 including artists and makers, educators, council staff and charity workers.

Vision

The Vision for Medway needs to be developed but will include the following principles:

Culture is at the heart of defining Medway's identity. Our Culture is what makes Medway a great place to live, work, learn and visit.

The positive impacts reach beyond the sector, into health and wellbeing, education, regeneration, community cohesion and civic pride.

Our cultural sector is a rich, diverse and exciting one that reflects our many different places and people. We need to grow and develop this sector so that we can best share what we have with the world.

Working together makes our cultural offer stronger. We will achieve this by creating diverse and sustainable partnerships within Medway and beyond.

Every person has the right to cultural participation and its many benefits. We will ensure these opportunities are open to everyone.



Values

These Values shape every aspect of how we create and deliver the Cultural Strategy – shared principles that will guide us over the next ten years:

We work in partnership This involves being generous, open and creative. Good partners understand the needs of others, respect boundaries and are always looking for positives.

We evaluate impact before we move on We employ a cycle of prototyping, testing, analysing and refining to make sure the Strategy responds to change.

We are strategic and think long-term In anything we do, we consider the long-term implications, making sure we are guided by our Values and fulfil our Vision.

Our actions are environmentally sustainable We recognise the cultural sector’s role in leading change and promoting environmental responsibility within our communities.

We enhance access for all We must reflect all the people of Medway, respect difference and recognise that diversity is a major opportunity - the source of new ideas and innovation.

We recognise culture is integral to wellbeing We acknowledge the positive impact of arts and culture on people’s physical, spiritual and mental health.

Themes

These Themes are the essential elements around which the Strategy is built. They provide its structure, support and boundaries:

Connectivity How we connect and communicate with others is vital; connectivity enables a more inclusive approach – encouraging reciprocity and trust within communities.

Shared Ambition Thinking about how our activity has benefit for all, and how our focus is on the delivery of the Vision and the associated collective benefit.

Spaces and Places Building spaces within Medway for creative practice to take place; making them accessible; modelling their benefits for the community and sustainability.

Grass Roots Up A holistic, ‘from the grass roots up’ approach to nurturing a healthy creative ecology where all the elements are supported – top down approaches alone will not be sufficient.

Community Engagement Unlocking our commitment to ‘culture for all’ by reaching as many people as possible, allowing them to get involved in culture in any way they want.