

CREATIVE MEDWAY

Overview

Background

In 2019, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council England, the Core Cities Group and the Key Cities Group, undertook the UK Cultural Cities Enquiry, an independent enquiry into the cultural resources of Britain's cities. It recommended that cities consider setting up "Cultural City Compacts".

The approach aims to co-create and co-deliver a holistic vision for culture in a place and to work together and with broader partners to provide leadership and strategic capacity and to provide a step change in the sustainability and impact of culture in that locality.

Medway was identified as an early adopter and, with support from Arts Council England, Medway Cultural Partnership and Medway Council, began the development of a Compact and cultural strategy for Medway.

After nearly twelve months of consultation (with a little COVID-related break in the middle), we are at the exciting stage of turning discussions into action and starting to build the delivery mechanism and get on with delivering Medway's new cultural strategy.

Medway's Cultural Strategy

Medway's Cultural Strategy runs from 2020 to 2030 – it is ambitious and forward-thinking, setting the foundations for the next decade of cultural development.

The Strategy sets out to make Medway stronger and more resilient in response to the current challenges, rather than simply survive them. It is based on two core beliefs:

- 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.
- Allowing people's voices to be heard unlocks the possibility of powerful and meaningful change.

The Vision for culture in Medway as set out in the Strategy is that:

By 2030 Medway will be internationally recognised for its creativity and culture, exemplifying the positive impacts on everyone’s lives. Diverse, collaborative and engaged, we will celebrate the strength and creativity of all our residents.

This Vision, and the Cultural Strategy as a whole, is delivered through five Themes and according to six Values. These are core to everything we set out to do.

Values	Themes
We work in partnership	Connectivity
We are strategic and think long-term	Shared Ambition
Our actions are environmentally sustainable	Spaces and Places.
We enhance access for all	Creative People
We recognise culture is integral to wellbeing and health	Community Engagement
We evaluate impact before we move on	

There are many factors that make Medway well placed to develop its cultural ecosystem and fulfil these ambitions – including its location and transport links, history of creative innovation and existing infrastructure.

To achieve the strategic outcomes set out in this document, we will adopt a unique and radical framework, the Creative Medway Delivery Model, that puts the people of Medway at its centre.

Creative Medway

Creative Medway is the governance and delivery model for Medway’s new cultural strategy. The model is open to everyone to participate in at a level and to a degree which suits them best. Creative Medway is formed of three key elements:

- Creative Medway Compact
- Creative Theme Working Groups
- Creative Congress

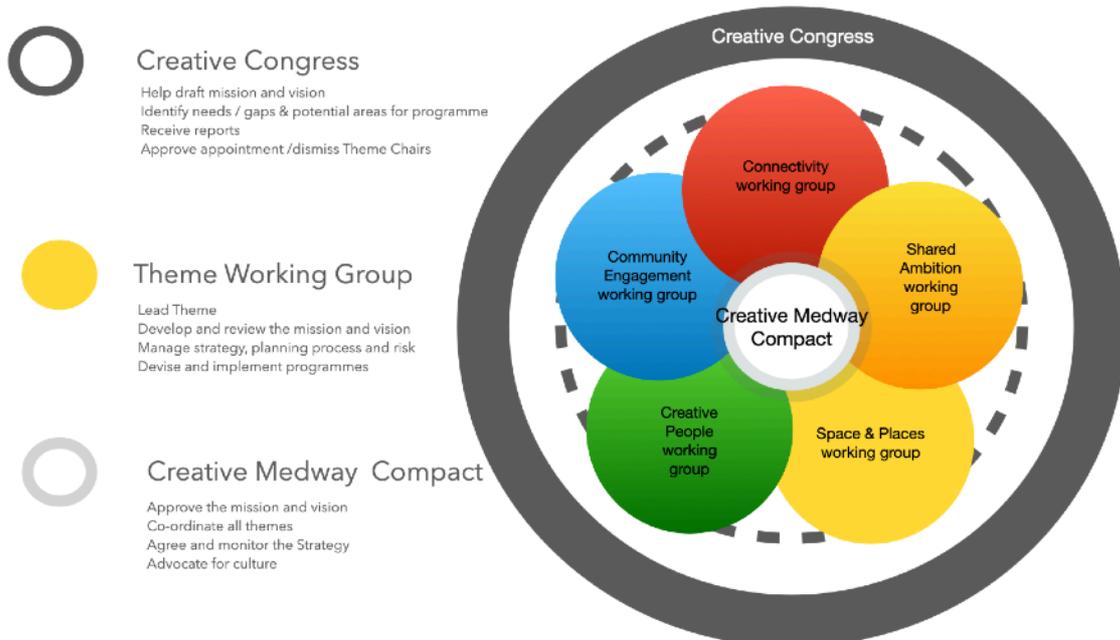
Creative Medway Compact is at the core of the delivery mechanism. The group is responsible for driving the ambition and the overall performance delivery of the strategy; it will be a strong advocate for Medway’s culture, at a local, regional and national level.

The Compact is made up of Theme Champions from each of the five Working Groups, five key stakeholders from other sectors (children and young people, economic growth, health and wellbeing, regeneration, voluntary sector), a Facilitator (initially delivered through Medway Council’s Head of Culture & Libraries) and the Creative Medway Chair.

The **Theme Working Groups** each have a membership made up of experts and leading lights to develop and deliver on the work strands for each theme. Each group will have clear terms of reference and code of conduct and, to ensure the Theme Working Groups run smoothly and transparently, each group will annually elect three roles: Facilitator, Yoda, and Champion.

Creative Congress is a broad group, open to all interested in culture in Medway and where culture can be the tool to support broader Medway objectives. In addition to receiving information and invitations to activities, it meets annually to review, reflect and plan.

Delivery Model: Creative Medway



Theme Group Visions

These are the visions for each Theme Working Group.

1.Connectivity By 2030 Medway's cultural sector is fully connected, physically, digitally and philosophically. Creatives feel part of the wider community and have a voice in Medway's cultural future. There are close links between different artforms and creative disciplines locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The cultural sector has strong links with diverse communities, and there are links between the cultural and wider sectors in Medway and beyond.

2.Shared Ambition By 2030 we are recognised for our world leading approach to cultural delivery and creatives locally and internationally want to make and share work in Medway. We have achieved this by the way we work together – leading the UK in the level of community buy-in to cultural strategy, and the commitment to making all feel involved and engaged. Culture is intrinsic to our place-making and enhances wellbeing through the unique work inspired and developed through these approaches.

3.Spaces and Places By 2030 Medway has numerous spaces to design, make and share culture which are accessible to all. Beacon Spaces¹ shine out from Medway whilst rooted in their communities. Medway works with partners in the region and beyond to enhance opportunities for inward investment to support spaces for culture. Throughout their careers, creatives will have appropriate spaces, at a variety of scales, that are protected for the social, economic and community value they provide.

4.Creative People By 2030 Medway's creatives are supported from their earliest moments of inspiration to international collaboration and recognition. Acknowledging the central role both of creatives and of cultural and educational organisations in the creative ecosystem, a holistic approach is taken that invites and welcomes in new talent and supports existing creatives with what each needs at any time. A culture of mentoring and curating pathways and opportunities for everyone wishing to broaden or deepen their making, watching or participation in cultural activity, leads to a stronger economy for Medway as a whole.

5.Community Engagement By 2030 all of Medway's communities have access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences and opportunities, and each individual has their creativity valued and given the chance to flourish. Communities know they have a voice and are architects of the projects that happen locally. Community engagement is a collective ambition, recognised as central to culture, the responsibility of all and a core around which we galvanise our cross-sector partnership approach.

¹ Defined within the workshops these will act to be centres of best practice, their work will shine out beyond the boundaries of Medway. Being locally linked they can be inspiring spaces for communities and could also include events and moments in time when Medway shares its best practice around the world.