

# CREATIVE MEDWAY: Context

## 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 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 set out in this Strategy is:

**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, will be delivered through five Themes and according to six Values. These are core to everything we set out to do.

## Values

- We work in partnership
- We are strategic and think long-term
- Our actions are environmentally sustainable
- We enhance inclusion and access for all
- We recognise culture is integral to wellbeing and health
- We evaluate impact before we move on.

## Themes

- Connectivity
- Shared Ambition
- Spaces and Places
- Creative People
- Community Engagement.

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:

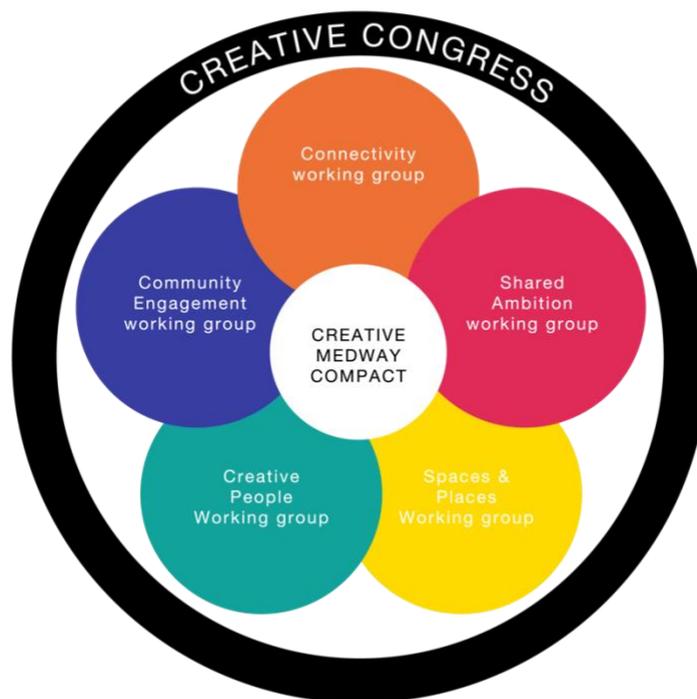
- Creative Medway Compact
- Theme Working Groups
- Creative Congress

**Creative Medway Compact** is at the core of the delivery mechanism. The group is responsible to drive 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.

**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.



*Diagram of the 6 different groups shaped like a flower, with the compact group being shown in the middle of the flower.*