

BRIGHTON & HOVE CULTURAL STRATEGY

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Message from Councillor David Smith Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism

My name is Councillor David Smith and I have the absolute honour and pleasure to be the Cabinet member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism in Brighton and Hove. I have been involved as a Councillor in Brighton and Hove for over 30 years now and I know this city inside out. There is no other portfolio area that I would rather hold.

This area of work is of great personal importance to me, but more crucially – it is of great importance to the city and its future. I have always been an enthusiastic supporter of culture and have witnessed the benefits myself over the years, to individuals to our city and its development, to our residents, businesses and visitors.

Our Corporate Plan was written to include the importance to our Administration of supporting the cultural offer and services in the city. What this Cultural Strategy document does, is to build on that and go further in outlining strengths and challenges, plans and aspirations.

What is also very important to me, is that there is cross party political sign up to this strategy and its aspirations. I believe that the cultural offer, the activities, the organisations and individuals, the buildings and the inspirational work that goes on must be subscribed to from all sides for the good of the future of the city.

We have some exciting things ahead of us: London 2012 creates some great opportunities for us locally to increase participation and active volunteering and to create some great new events for the city for example. 2012 gives us a focus for all sorts of cultural activity alongside the charge it will create for sports development in Brighton and Hove. Following the example of the Mayor of London, we have not covered sports activity in this Cultural Strategy, but have chosen to cover it separately in its own strategy.

Finally I would like to mention and commend our partnership working. I am proud of the work that we lead at the city council, but the city would be nowhere without its fantastic cultural organisations and partners. We have a really enviable set of delivery organisations and individuals that go to make up collectively such an impressive sector.

I hope that over the next 12 month period we will hear more from them to contribute to this strategy and take forward our shared vision for the city.

A Cultural Strategy for Brighton and Hove Introductory Message: Scott Marshall Director of Culture and Enterprise

For a city like Brighton and Hove, a Cultural Strategy is not hard to write. Culture is one of the driving forces of this city and has been for hundreds of years; it is the city's past, its present and what this strategy sets out to do, is to set out what culture will mean to its future.

There is a particular link in Brighton and Hove between our cultural sector and the success of our economy. In this strategy we outline in more detail the precise contribution that culture makes to the success of our economy – but there is something more intangible in this that is to do with exactly how our city works, what makes it distinctive, what is its personality and what makes it tick.

In this current economic climate, in a time of recession, it is even more important for us to use all the assets that city has in helping to stabilise the economy and to look to build for the future – to be ready for when we can pull out of this recession. We need to be providing more free events for our city to encourage attendance and expenditure, we need to increase public confidence and improve and enhance the environment of our city through our culture. However, the role of culture and of creativity is not just about direct spend or jobs, it is also about the innovation and invention element in a chain of production, it is about broadening horizons and changing lives – it is all the things that we have need of now and will continue to have need of as we face a challenging future.

The importance of this Cultural Strategy for me is twofold; structurally it provides an overarching umbrella for the cultural services and initiatives that we have in the council and beyond. There is a range of more detailed policy documents that sit underpinning this which can provide additional detail and context in different areas. In this way, it also provides an easy link to a range of strategic policy documents such as the Community Strategy and Brighton and Hove's Economic Strategy.

Secondly, I hope that it will provide inroad opportunities for our partners across the city to link to, creating a framework for them to join with us in presenting the wealth of cultural opportunity we have to offer and stretch to meet the challenges.

With all of this combined, it gives us an outward facing statement of achievement and of intent that I hope we can all sign up to.

The City Today

Brighton and Hove is the creative powerhouse of the region and has the potential to become a national cultural leader. Its strength lies in its combination of people and place: a city of contrasts defined by the AND in its name. The city has unique architectural heritage and cutting edge contemporary culture: art and entertainment: countryside and cosmopolitan sea front and rich and poor neighbourhoods and communities. These contrasts are united by a uniquely Brighton & Hove spirit of creativity, open-mindedness and free spiritedness. The spirit of the City is captured in two unique wonders: the Royal Pavilion explodes with creative genius, energy and the excess of its colourful past and the Brighton Pier is loud and brash, pure fun, relaxation and pleasure by the sea.

There is the city's cultural quarter surrounding the renowned Royal Pavilion, with refurbished impressive historic homes for the Dome complex of theatres and the Museum and Gallery: the two hundred year old Theatre Royal Brighton crowning the Gehl designed contemporary New Road, and the award winning Jubilee Library, itself the centrepiece of a modern and lively district with new apartments, a hotel, retail and sporting facilities.

The city is cosmopolitan; it is socially, culturally and creatively diverse with a unique social history with long artistic traditions. We have two Universities with international reputations for excellence and demonstrable local commitment to the success of our economy and increasing opportunities for our residents. Several regional and national cultural organisations are based in the city including the National Dance Agency for the South East, New Writing South and Photoworks. There are over 50 Festivals each year ranging from critically renowned art-form festivals to neighbourhood festivals and community of interest festivals. This includes the Brighton Festival each year in May which is the largest arts festival in England and, with its umbrella 'festivals within festival', contributes more than £20m to the local economy. The city hosts major sporting and cultural outdoor events and attractions and is seen as a specialist in creating outdoor performance and a national leader in producing outdoor events. We have the largest Festival Fringe in England and a deserved and growing reputation for producing interesting site specific and cross art form performance.

It is also home to creative practitioners who forge new directions and has a reputation for networking, flexible working, innovation and collaboration. This attracts global giants in new technology and media: the city is the real world European home of Linden Lab the inventors of Second Life. We are home to the annual Develop Conference the leading European games development expo. Brighton and Hove is ranked at number 5 in the national Sharpie Index on Creative Cities published in 2008 which measures the creativity of individuals and businesses alongside a rigorous range of other indicators.

Brighton and Hove's Museum Service ranks in the top ten performing unitary authorities in the country, and it is a regional hub for museums. Its Library Services rank in the top five of unitary authorities with the Children's Library Services ranking as the second best in the whole country with satisfaction rates at 91%. Jubilee Library is fifth most popular (i.e. well used) library in the country and our libraries receive over 1.8 million visits each year. In terms of the new National Indicator NI11, Engagement in the Arts, Brighton and Hove is the top ranked authority in the country outside of the London Boroughs and the highest in the region.

Brighton & Hove manages the pressures of modern life without the stresses of a large population but with as much convenience and amenity as a large centre can offer. Surrounded by natural beauty, the urban environment is of a human scale, the City is an appealing place to live, work, play and visit and is high on the list as a major conference destination. There are 8 million visitors a year and the tourism industry contributes over £400m to the local economy.

The city is well known for its vibrant grassroots nightlife, a unique cabaret and theatre scene, a music scene which numbers 1,000 bands and club nights that cater for every taste. There are more than 50 venues - including theatres, performance spaces, pubs and clubs - mostly well within walking distance of each other. There are small scale contemporary art galleries, 1000 Open House artists and a growing public art portfolio finding a place throughout and across the City. There is also a diverse authentic and bohemian independent retail offer particularly in North Laine and The Lanes.

There is excellent cross sector partnership working supporting the development of culture and cultural representation on both the Local Strategic Partnership & the Economic Partnership underlining the importance the city places on culture. Successful models for stimulating the cultural sector have grown here, with the Brighton & Hove Arts Commission and Creative Brighton both providing independent and arms length sector led vision, advocacy and dialogue and creating a solid base for expanding infrastructure.

There are dedicated arts and cultural programmes for the young through the award winning Brighton & Hove Music and Performing Arts service, bespoke libraries, museums and arts programmes and a wealth of opportunities offered by the range of cultural providers in the city. The Further and Higher Education institutions in the city also offer a range of cultural opportunities including qualifications in Outdoor Events production and management at City College.

Community spirit is infectious in Brighton & Hove. The third sector is a powerful force for positive change in the city with strong community involvement in a range of neighbourhood services, facilities, activities and events. There are more than 5000 members of the Community and Voluntary sector forum. There is a successful and popular range of neighbourhood libraries museums and community centres across the city.

This position is one of great strength and an excellent foundation on which to build and thrive.

The Challenges

By standing still, the City will lose its place. Competition from elsewhere in the UK and Europe could challenge the City's leading position. It has the opportunity to achieve and maintain a national prominence it has not achieved before. It is the time for the City to show leadership.

The city faces some particular challenges as it grows and develops. Inequality and disadvantage are often linked to both social and economic background and geographical location and Brighton & Hove is home to more than its share of individuals and families with multiple disadvantages. We value our contrast in the cultural experiences on offer but will not allow this contrast to spread to access to opportunities.

As well as its intrinsic value culture provides solutions. It has a positive impact and contributes to meeting society's various social and economic agendas. Quite simply culture can help make life better.

The City has severe pockets of deprivation and is in danger of developing a dual economy: there is evidence of a growing gap between the wealthy and the poor. The City has a high degree of affluence but some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country.

The City's employment and skills plan concludes that the City needs to create sufficient jobs to support its growing working age population and to ensure that a good proportion of these jobs are high value-added to better deploy the highly qualified resident population. It needs to strengthen the City's economic base, increase the supply of jobs but not bypass lower skilled and disadvantaged local residents, improve business performance and productivity, and take social welfare interventions designed to tackle worklessness, inequality and disadvantage.

The City's study of creative workspace reports a shortage of suitable business sites and premises and a need to upgrade the quality of stock. There is a shortage of business support targeted at creative industries and a lack of finance for new and growing creative businesses.

There is increasing competition from home and abroad in the leisure and business tourism markets. The transport system, particularly the train system, does not encourage visitors to stay and enjoy the City's night economy. It is a difficult city for the tourist and visitor to navigate and find the sights. The City's reputation as a destination for freedom, amusement and pleasure can create difficulty in managing issues of safety, crime and antisocial behaviour.

There are a high proportion of arts and creative professionals living and working in the City but that has not translated into a high level of Brighton-based work created or showcased in the City.

Local people have high expectations of the city's libraries services and there are increasing demands for expanded children's services, support for reading and creative writing activities, and better quality information provision. The potential of many of the community branches could be maximised further and the standards of some are not meeting national benchmarks. The museums aspire to reaching the broader audiences,

the significance of the collections could be exploited further and public access to many important parts of the collections expanded.

There is much more that can be achieved in Brighton and Hove.

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Case Study 1: Useful Arts

Useful Arts is an arts organisation run for and by service users of the drug and alcohol treatment services and the mental health treatment services in the city. Useful Arts aims to provide support and encourage participation in arts and multi media events for both Service Users and the general public. Useful Arts believe that taking part in art activities has been shown to provide therapeutic benefits for Service Users, it aids their recovery process, provides a sense of accomplishment and promotes self confidence.

Their current project is The Myth of London Road is a community photography project which aims to raise awareness of the experience of being a Service User and challenge negative perceptions of Service Users whilst restoring some community cohesion into the London Road area. The project is running as part of Brighton Fringe festival and has been award the Argus Angel Community Project Award.

Case Study 2: Micro Museums: Royal Pavilion & Museums

In an exciting initiative to deliver 'micro museums' in non-museum locations across Brighton & Hove, we opened two micro museums in 2008: one at Sure Start Children's Centre in Whitehawk and the other at the community library and Sure Start Children's centre in Portslade.

The partner locations were hands-on in choosing the themes and collections for their own displays. At Portslade Library, toys and local history were chosen. After consultation at Whitehawk Children's Centre to find out what made their visitors tick, hundreds of objects and photographs were brought out of stores to form a series of new displays about the area's history, including its internationally important Neolithic archaeology.

Feedback from visitors at Whitehawk Children's Centre demonstrated that 68% of under 16s and 54% of adults said they will visit one of the city's museums as a result of seeing the display. Previously 6% of those who looked at the display had never visited any of the city's museums and only a quarter had visited the Royal Pavilion or Brighton Museum before.

The Commitments

Engagement

The city's cultural offer already engages with a high number of its residents. According to the most recent National Indicator surveys undertaken at the end of 2008, well over half the population engage with the arts and just over half with our museum and library services. The footfall figures for our main central library Jubilee are around one million visits per year and it is the fifth most popular library in the country. The Brighton Dome programme reached one in six households currently and the Brighton Festival audience each year is around 70% from local BN postcodes.

Against this healthy backdrop, our efforts are best placed in targeted outreach and inclusion work which seeks to break down barriers to engagement for those who are not currently accessing the city's fantastic opportunities as well as ensuring that we continue to serve and stretch our existing cultural audience.

There is some excellent work taking place in terms of targeted engagement work as shown in the case study illustrations.

In the next five year period we will build on this:

ACTIONS

- Work with our partners, such as the Brighton Dome and Festival to sustain and extend engagement.
- Create targeted arts programmes aimed at priority groups and prioritise engagement in our annual grants.
- Museums services will increase the number and broaden the diversity of people using our collections, buildings, gardens and services
- Develop an inclusive and inspiring programme for Brighton and Hove 2012 with city partners
- Develop our community libraries as local hubs which underpin social cohesion such as the extension of Portslade Library to include a Children's Gateway Centre and Micro-Museum which has resulted in a 30% increase in use
- Introduce a Visitor Greeter scheme to connect visitors with local people.

Case Study 3: Wired Sussex

Wired Sussex is a key business development agency for the digital media sector, supporting approximately 700 Brighton & Hove businesses. Basic membership of Wired Sussex is free, and benefits include networking events, specialist training, and assistance in recruitment; all of which has assisted in creating a powerful hub of peer-to-peer support in the sector.

The organisation works with public, private and third sector partners to represent the interests of the local digital business community, such as ensuring new flexible workspace is developed in the city, and working with the economic development to hosting potential inward investors. A number of these visits have proved successful; for example, Club Penguin, a subsidiary of Disney, opened an office in Brighton in mid 2008.

Case Study 4: The Royal Pavilion and its impact on tourism and the city

In 2006 Brighton Business School carried out a study to measure the cultural impact of the city's iconic palace. Over 600 surveys were conducted among both residents and visitors to the city. 74% of visitors had heard of the Royal Pavilion before their visit to the city, associating it most closely with royalty and history. 13% of visitors cited the Royal Pavilion as a factor that influenced their visit to the city. Based on the city's estimated tourism expenditure, this equates to approximately £55.9 million of visitor spend in the city being influenced by the Royal Pavilion. Among residents, 65% saw the Royal Pavilion as an important contributor to the city's economy and 77% saw it as an important part of the image of the city.

Economy

In Brighton and Hove culture means jobs and a positive impact on the city's economy in a number of ways. In terms of direct employment, the tourism sector accounts for 20% of employment and contributes over £400m into the local economy. The creative and cultural industries account for a further 10% of employment minimum. One fifth of businesses are classed in the creative and cultural sector and it is the fastest growing business sector. The Brighton Festival contributes £20m into the local economy every May.

Indirectly, the cultural offer is clearly an integral part of the success of our tourism; a reason for people to come and to stay. It is also a key contributor to the quality of life impacts that are so important both in retaining existing business and attracting new employers and investors.

Events and visible free cultural programmes across the city have a key role to play at the best of times and in a time of oncoming recession, the role is even more important. This is in raising public confidence and activity in the city, stimulating secondary spend and keeping a sense of year round vibrancy.

Maximising this impact and continuing to develop the gain for the city means:

ACTIONS

- Continuing to invest in cultural provision for the city; maintaining and developing the quality, freshness and uniqueness of the content
- Prioritising support to the creative industries sector; encouraging workspace expansion, including it in both mixed use schemes and as planning gain, working with partners in our Universities to maximise their strengths in innovation
- Developing the sustainable tourism charter hotel initiative
- Highlight the role of culture in relevant investment strategies such as the Economic Strategy
- Work with partners to develop new initiatives for the city's cultural calendar such as the Book and the Rose
- Develop the destination marketing activity to generate an increase in the £408m tourism impact.

Place

Culture has been a hugely important shaping force in the physical landscape of the city. The culturally led regeneration schemes over the last 15 years have defined the city as it is today as did the visionary architecture of 200 years ago.

The importance of high quality public and urban realm is well understood in Brighton and Hove. We have an excellent Legibility Strategy and an operational Percent for Art Policy that both feed into the aspirations of this strategy. The University of Brighton's courses in Architecture and Design offer opportunities for the city in developing urban design projects with the Faculty of Arts.

Art and design and history, events and activity are informative and inspirational starting points for the creation of successful public places and spaces. Our cultural buildings, both old and new, in Brighton and Hove make up a most enviable collection and most within walking distance of each other.

Culture must continue to play this successful role in the ongoing development of our city around us.

ACTIONS

- We will maintain a role in delivering the City's Legibility Strategy and in contributing to new developments
- Take responsibility for caring for the portfolio of historic buildings, preservation and increased access
- Promote and develop events for the city such as White Night and others
- Continue to develop innovative ways of improving public spaces including the use of large destination images on the front of disused premises

Case Study 5: New Road

As part of a comprehensive drive to improve streets and squares across the city, Brighton and Hove City Council commissioned an international design team led by Copenhagen's Gehl Architects to work with local residents and stakeholders in developing proposals for New Road.

The design uses granite blocks to create a high quality setting for the listed buildings which line New Road, including the Pavilion Theatre, the Dome and the Theatre Royal Brighton. The granite is attractive whilst being robust enough to take heavy traffic loads. The scheme encourages social, leisure and other uses and invites users to reclaim the city. The road is lined with a 50 metre bespoke wooden bench with an artist designed lighting commission in it which features random changing light patterns after dark.

The scheme has taken New Road from being an unsuccessful public space to the 4th most visited space in the city and the recipient of a Civic Trust Award.

Case Study 6: Jubilee Library and Square

The development has been key in maintaining the city as a regional and national cultural centre. It re-established the literary focus to the developing Cultural Quarter, and added leisure, retail and business services, a new city square and performance space.

The development prompted further upgrading to the surrounding areas, estimated to be worth £4.2m. The added footfall; more visitors staying longer has added an estimated additional £4.4m expenditure into the city.

The completed scheme is also estimated to have generated 500-700 sustainable full time jobs in the local economy – this is equivalent to £12.2 and £16.3m a year.

The return on public sector investment has been in the range of 1:10.

Case Study 7: Early Years: Royal Pavilion & Museums

Supported through funding from Renaissance in the Regions, a dedicated Early Years museum specialist has been working in all 14 of the city's Children's Centres and in libraries and nurseries, providing family learning workshops for children under five and their parents.

Such sessions are currently reaching 2,000 children a year. In line with *Every Child Matters* the workshops aim to create a sense of community through working with the stories and artefacts of the city, communicating shared histories and developing skills, knowledge and understanding in under 5s. Importantly they are also designed to develop confidence of parents in supporting their child's learning through play, with new initiatives for 2009 targeted at supporting father and toddler groups.

Case Study 8: Homework Clubs

Homework clubs offer stimulating and free professional study support for young people. Evaluation has shown that pupils who participate in study support do better than would have been expected from baseline measures in academic attainment, attitudes to school and attendance at school. Study support appears to be especially effective for students from minority ethnic communities. Participating pupils also acquired more positive attitudes to learning and better school attendance.

Learning

Cultural programmes can offer life changing alternative, accessible and engaging opportunities. We support education and learning at all stages in people's lives, through access to information, collections, creative and cultural activities. It is through creative and cultural activities that we can often reach those most alienated in our society.

There are significant roles to play in developing life skills, in connecting children and young people to each other and to the wider community, in increasing self esteem and positive self expression, in widening horizons and boosting a desire for self development. This impact is particularly significant for those children and young people that are often marginalized from mainstream services particularly looked after children and those not in education, employment or training.

Extending this valuable role that culture can play means:

ACTIONS

- Work with learning partners across the city to support and encourage learning at all ages, particularly our Universities and Further and Higher Education providers
- Target support to people facing particular barriers to learning/those alienated from traditional learning routes
- Promote the empowering role of informal learning in underpinning personal and community development, through reading, creative activity and cultural experiences
- Improving reading and literacy levels of children and adults through the implementation of a City-wide reading strategy
- Increasing access to information, knowledge and learning through online services in Libraries, making public information and communication technology (ICT) more available and more popular
- Improve museum education services for children and adults through the Museum Renaissance Programme
- Implementing key aims of Express – Strategy for young people education and the arts
- Developing apprenticeship schemes in creative and cultural industries.

Case Study 9: White Night

Brighton and Hove has a thriving night time economy. Sometimes, aspects of this can tip into anti-social and criminal activity that make the city centre less welcome and safe for all. White Night was an initiative developed by the Brighton and Hove Arts Commission in order to create an alternative night time offer. It is a 24 hour cultural festival which took place on the night the clocks went back in October 2008. Around 15,000 people came to take part in free events in the city centre, venues stayed open and there was a range of outdoor events, exhibitions and performances. The atmosphere was very friendly and the audience ranged in age from toddlers to pensioners. The majority of those surveyed felt 'extremely safe' and the event was very popular with those who might not otherwise come into the city at that time.

Case Study 10: Libraries and health

Research into health information seeking with library users carried out by the University of Brighton has revealed our public libraries are very highly trusted as a source of health information, second only to GPs and ranked above other health care professionals and pharmacists. National research has identified that 48% of people who visit libraries are seeking health-related information and 97% find this information useful (in Brighton & Hove terms that equates to 846,000 people. 75% of GPs (14 surgeries) found Books on Prescription helpful or very helpful in a study on the pilot phase.

Wellbeing

Culture makes us healthy and happy, it encourages people to be active and do the things they enjoy. This increases personal, physical and mental wellbeing and helps build healthy communities. Culture and sports activities support healthy lifestyles by promoting good physical and mental health and well being. Research shows that people who do not participate in culture and sport say they have lower levels of health. Libraries have a particular role in the support of health education, health promotion and self-help, by communicating public health information and lifestyle messages.

Arts and health is a broad area of work, covering what the National Network for Arts in Health (NNAH) defines as four distinct areas:

- Arts in health care settings: all forms of art within healthcare settings
- Community arts in health: the use of community arts to deliver health agenda and health messages
- Medical humanities: the use of arts and humanities in medical education
- Art therapy: a distinct area of practice, focussed on the individual and looking for therapeutic benefit through art.

The role of culture in the design and operation of public space can also have a positive impact in terms of reducing anti-social behaviour; making places safer whether through the use of lighting or by creating spaces that encourages active use and natural surveillance. There are particular issues in Brighton and Hove in terms of welfare that culture could focus on:

ACTIONS

- Work with health and community partners in providing reliable and effective health information across the city
- Develop role of arts and culture as integral part of therapy, especially in combating mental health issues plus specific initiatives with mental health service users
- Promote lighting strategies and projects for unsafe spaces
- Expand the number of White Night locations and programmes
- Extend the range of walking tour podcasts on visitbrighton.com

Identity

Our collective cultural identity for the city is important in many ways. Locally for our residents it contributes towards a pride of place, it is key to creating the civic identity or identities that people can sign up to and be part of; creating and belonging.

Our cultural identity beyond the city boundaries means our attractiveness to visitors, our credibility with regional and national agencies, our potential for taking a leadership role in the development of the cultural agenda for the UK and beyond.

This will continue to be important and in developing this dual identity, we need to be both responsive and to lead the way.

ACTIONS

- Support community based initiatives through culture that develop neighbourhood and community identity and cohesion
- Play a full role in Eurocities, particularly in the Culture sub group
- Take a leading and co-ordinating role in shaping a programme for Brighton and Hove looking towards 2012 to maximise opportunities for the city's residents, businesses and visitors
- Take a leading role in regional groupings such as the Cultural Regional Improvement Partnership
- Take a leading role in developing national groupings such as the Cultural Cities Network
- Take a role in the development of national policy in culture such as Chairing the new International Standard on Tourist Information.

Case Study 11: Pankhurst Avenue Photography Project

As part of a new housing development on Pankhurst Avenue a photography project was created to promote a new community centre to residents. The residents' committee needed a way to let the community know about the space and what facilities they could access there.

The committee commissioned a photographer to work to carry out a participatory project designed for all different members of the community: young mums and babies, teenagers, older people and entire families. Each group could sign up for a series of photography workshops, which took place in the new community centre, where they learnt how to use a digital camera and took photos for an exhibition.

All the workshops were full to capacity and the project resulted in a huge collection of photography which will be on permanent exhibition in the new facility and a film made by young people which can be also be seen at the centre. Over 75 community members took part in the project and a regular camera club has now formed. A group of teenagers have decided they want to make another film and have formed a group to write a script.

Case Study 12: Cultural Cities Network

Following Brighton and Hove's bid to host the European Capital of Culture in 2002, the city became a founder member of a national network of cities who had also bid. One of the results from the lobbying of this Network was the establishment of the Urban Cultural Programme which brought funding of £750k into a cultural programme for Brighton and Hove.

The Network has also run 2 successful national projects across the member cities. It is made up of a range of different sized cities and continues to lobby government on the importance of culture to local areas, providing case study material, good practice and advice.