

Arts, Culture and Creative Sector

Culture, Heritage and Green Space Service

20 April 2023

Arts and Cultural Fund





Just a few of the projects of Yr 1 (2022/23)

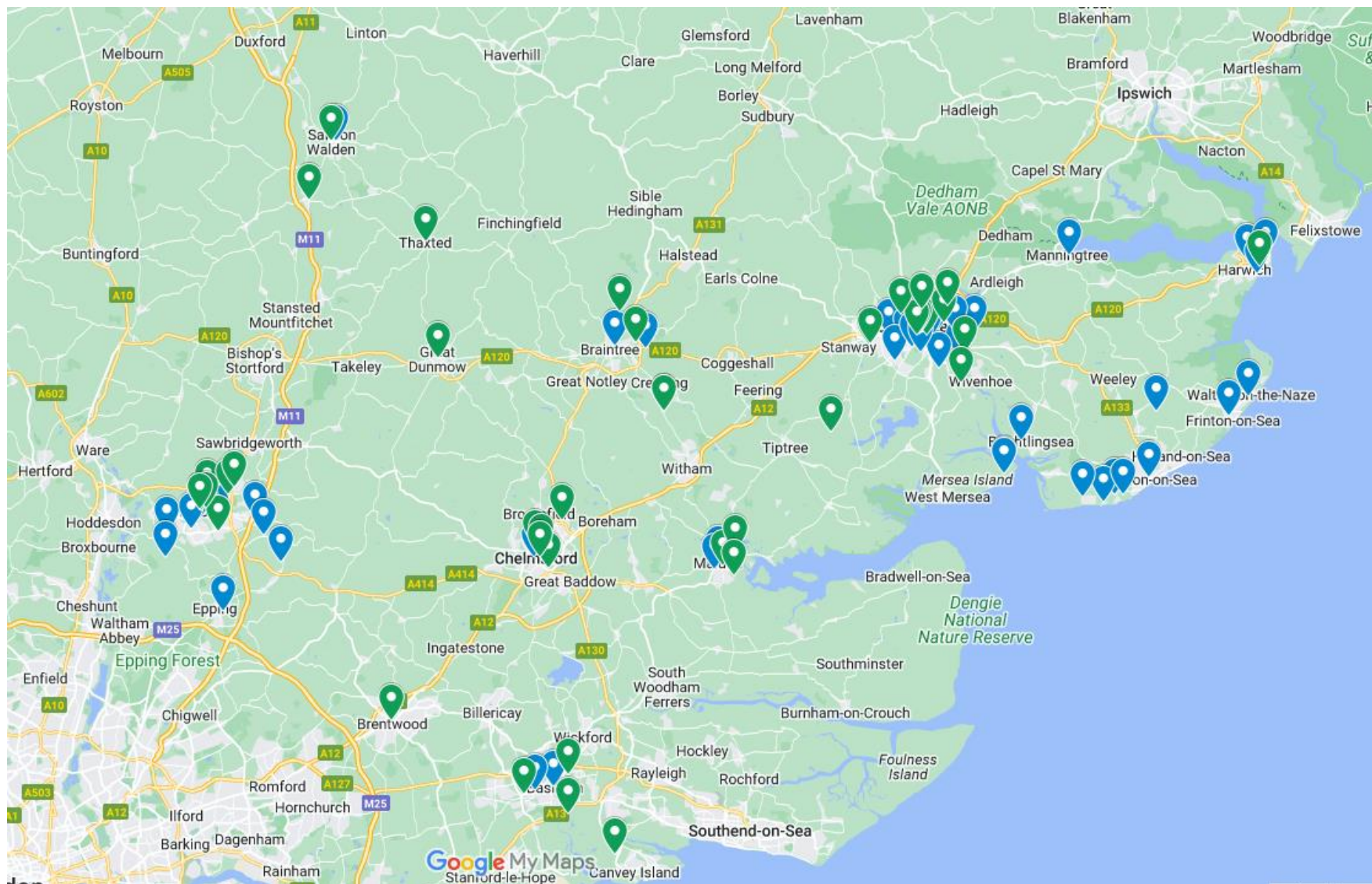
Click on the video to hear from some of the 2022/23 ECC Arts and Cultural Fund recipients



Arts and Cultural Fund Yr 1 – evaluation

- Evaluation reports are still being received from projects which were completed in year 1.
- The quality of projects supported was high, which is evidenced by other funders or partners which the projects attracted, notably Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Community Lottery.
- To date, match funding for Arts and Cultural Fund funded projects is in excess of £400,000
- To date, in excess of 300,000 residents have been able to participate in or have access to a range of projects, shows and performances either in person, or online.
- Projects have enabled over 3,500 School age children to take part in arts and cultural projects
- The projects enabled 340 creative practitioners to be employed to deliver the projects

Arts and Cultural Fund recipients Yr1 and Yr2



Arts and Cultural fund Yr2

- 154 applications received
- 10% of applications received all or part of the requested funding
- Grants were awarded to a range of artistic disciplines and projects
- The smallest award was £4,500 and the largest £20,000
- Projects will be undertaken across Essex including: Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Harlow, Maldon, Tendring, Uttlesford with a number of projects being delivered across multiple locations.

The recipients of the ECC Arts and Cultural Fund 2023/24

- **Age Well East Ltd** will develop a new Veterans' Choir formed of attendees from Colchester and Harwich Veterans' Friendship Groups, providing vital regular social connection for local ex-service personnel.
- **Chelmsford Community Radio CIC** will run a new Radio Drama Festival with local schools, providing workshops on radio broadcasting, listening sessions and the recording of a new radio play broadcast online and on Chelmsford Community Radio.
- **Elevator Arts CIC** will deliver 'Hidden Voices', a creative project in partnership with young carers' charity Kool Carers, working with young people aged 12 to 15 in Basildon to amplify voices of young carers and improve their mental health and wellbeing.
- **Essex Book Festival** are leading a dedicated family and young people's mini festival under the banner of Midsummer Madness to be hosted at Cressing Temple Barns in Braintree.
- **Estuary Festival** will host an artist residency on Canvey Island. Working closely with local communities, RSPB, Buglife and local community partners to develop a new public realm artwork in response to diverse local people's ideas and perspectives about the environment, nature, and ecology.
- **Fresh Air Festival** will bring leading outdoor artists to perform at a series of community events in Tendring including Brightlingsea Free Music Festival, Brightlingsea Food and Drink Festival, Brightlingsea Regatta, Back to School Fun Day, and Brightlingsea Carnival.
- **Harlow Art Trust** will deliver a high-quality programme of exciting and inspiring arts and cultural experiences in partnership with Harlow Creates to mark its 70th anniversary.
- **Laura Jean Healey** will produce a new short film, 'After Ophelia', which will be used as a vehicle to promote filmmaking as a career in Essex. The project will also offer trainee roles to emerging creatives. An inaugural presentation of the film will take place at Wat Tyler Country Park with a series of events exploring the portrayal of women in art and film.
- **Maldon Festival** will launch a new 'Get Going with Art and Music' initiative. This will provide new opportunities for children, young people, families, and schools in Essex to enjoy and appreciate art and music and to enable them to access new performance and exhibition opportunities in the county.
- **Matt Gurr** will deliver a community engagement project to platform the voices and experiences of young people in Essex who identify as LGBTQI+. Developed in partnership with OutHouse East, the programme will run concurrently alongside 'Cowboy', a new play by Gurr based on his experience of growing up gay in Essex which will be performed at the Mercury Theatre and Harlow Playhouse.
- **Orchestras Live** will launch 'Good Company', a radical new creative day-care programme which harnesses the power of the arts to engage and support vulnerable people living with dementia and other age-related illnesses/disabilities in Brentwood and south Essex, alongside their carers.
- **Shephali Frost** will develop a new refugee world music project that will incorporate poetry and music from the refugee communities across Essex to capture their cultures and languages.
- **Thaxted Festival** will launch a new Developing Artists Programme to provide a platform for professional musicians and composers at the earlier stages of their careers, both within their main summer season and through concerts and outreach programmes.
- **The Paper Birds Theatre Co.** are leading a new project 'The School of Hope', which will give voice and opportunity to young people in Maldon aged 14 to 18 with multi-art workshops to explore the theme of empathy.
- **Wild Arts** will deliver early years concerts, primary school opera and singing projects, as well as recitals in secondary schools, young talent showcases and a young talent apprentice scheme in Colchester.

ECC Cultural Strategy



The need for a strategy

- In 2021, ECC committed £1.5m to supporting the arts and culture in Essex over the next 5 years. This is being delivered through the ECC Arts and Cultural Fund, a newly formed Cultural Development Team and the Essex Film Office.
- The ECC cultural strategy provides a framework, it is a mark of support for the cultural and creative sector as it recovers post-COVID and develops in the future.
- It creates a shared vision for the arts and culture in recognition of the growth and potential of the creative sector in Essex.
- A joined up approach will enable a better, more collaborative way of working with National bodies i.e Arts Council England
- Support a Greater Essex approach around devolution.

“It’s great to see **Essex County Council** investing in the creative and cultural sectors through their Arts and Cultural Fund and recognising that the creative industries play a vital role in the good health and wellbeing of local communities. This financial investment should help boost the sector and I support the council’s aims of developing a long term, sustainable future for arts and culture in the county.”

Michael Landy CBE RA

Partners and contributors

- All 12 districts and Thurrock and Southend were invited to input into strategy via workshops / interviews.
- Representatives External / national agencies were invited to participate including Arts Council England (ACE), National Lottery Heritage Fund, Creative England.
- Essex based ACE National Portfolio Organisations were consulted, as were individual artists and organisations across the region.
- Residents and creative / cultural business were invited to input via an online survey.

“ It is hugely powerful when a local authority makes a clear commitment to supporting arts, culture and creativity by publishing an ambitious cultural strategy.

In November 2022, we announced our 2023-2026 National Portfolio, which included £12 million in funding over three years across 13 organisations in Essex, including five that will receive funding through our National Portfolio for the first time.

We're delighted that ECC is following that announcement by setting out its own commitment to arts, culture, and creativity with a new and ambitious cultural strategy.

I look forward to working **in partnership with ECC** to ensure that more people across the county have the opportunity to experience, participate in and enjoy all that the arts, culture and creativity have to offer. “

Hazel Edwards, Area Director, Arts Council England



ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

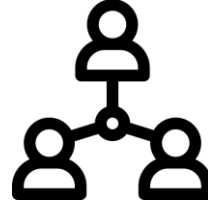
CULTURAL STRATEGY

A need for cultural development



Diversity

We're a diverse county in all its forms. We need to celebrate these differences and create opportunities which reflect the diversity of our communities and make the most of our assets.



Connection

We're widespread between cities, towns, villages and rural areas. We're home to some of the fastest growing communities in the UK and our demographics are constantly shifting. The nature of some art forms require solitude, while others work in small groups and communities. We need to create greater opportunities for formal and informal connection by building on existing networks and working across art forms.



Place

We're ideally placed to make the most of our connections to London, the east and south east and Europe. We will actively seek ways to build partnerships and networks outside of Essex. We will celebrate the geography of our county and find ways to create and support more cultural activity in rural areas.



Talent Retention

Our proximity to London could work against us. Without the opportunities for career progression in the cultural and creative sectors many young people, graduates and those in their early career will leave Essex. We need to work in partnership to develop and promote a joined-up approach to talent development which addresses the current and future needs of the sector



Sustainability

Our natural environment is a key asset in Essex. We will find sensitive and creative ways in which to utilise our green spaces and encourage engagement with arts and nature.



Creative Economy

We appreciate the economic value of the cultural and creative industries but need to do more to advocate and influence beyond our peer network. As a county we aim to create an environment in which creativity and innovation can thrive and to work in partnership to develop a holistic approach to culture which includes hospitality, tourism and leisure, transport and the environment



Identity

How we feel about Essex, our place in it, and how the county is perceived all influence our growth. We will explore new narratives and create a county-wide approach to celebrate the contemporary cultural identity of Essex



Access and Equity

As a county we have a track record of being successful in attracting funding and support to develop significant areas of Essex, however, there are still pockets of relative deprivation and a lack of equity in terms of access to cultural activity. We need to take a county-wide approach to attracting funding to develop arts and to join forces to realise ambitious projects and to support access to culture where it is most needed

4 Key principles

- **ENRICH** by contributing to a confident and resilient cultural and creative sector.
- **EMPOWER** by supporting cultural networks and collaboration.
- **AMPLIFY** by increasing engagement and diversity.
- **GROW** the cultural and creative sectors by supporting innovation and sustainable growth.



What's next..

We will be undertaking a project to map Creative Hubs across Greater Essex. This process will:

- provides a high-level overview of the current creative hubs landscape in Essex.
- Illustrate the role that creative hubs can play in the development of the creative industries in Essex.
- Recommend specific interventions to support the creative sector in Essex.

We will start to consider future iterations of the Cultural Strategy and look at and how we can build upon the work being undertaken in Districts and by other public/ private sector organisations to continue to build a compelling case for culture in Essex.



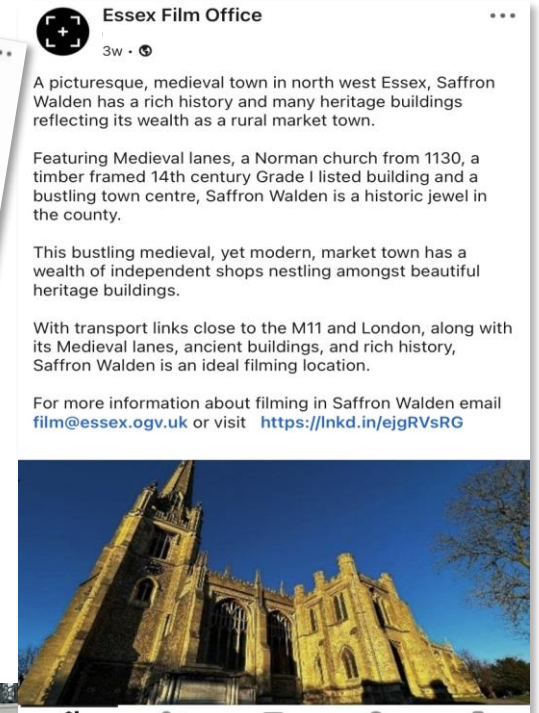
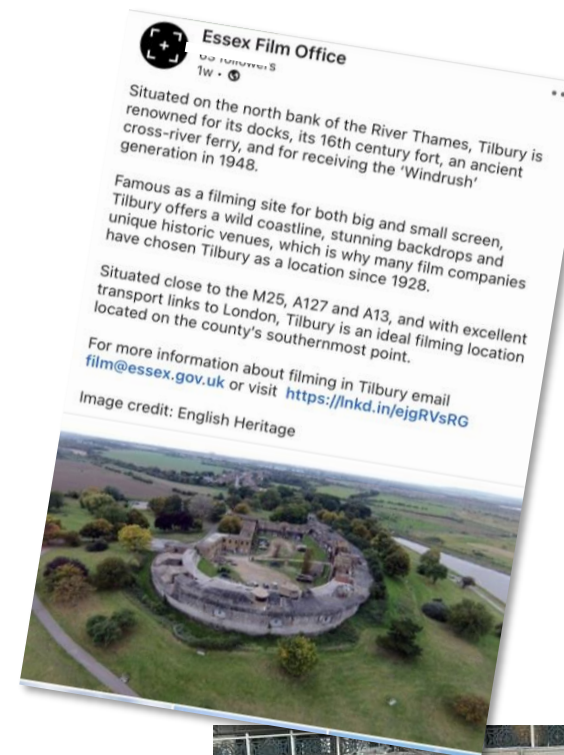
Essex Film Office



Essex Film Office

Over past 6 months we have:

- Commissioned locations software
- Website due to go live in summer
- Launched social media channels where we are starting to showcase Essex
- Begun the process of setting up protocols for permitting
- Supporting Districts
- Identifying locations within ECC, districts and the wider Essex to put forward as locations.
- Attended leading events and exhibitions to get Essex on the map for filming.





Any Questions?