

# Ebbfleet Garden City

Culture  
Vision







Artist Esther Collins displaying work from her community project  
'Chalk & Cheese' at 'The Gathering' March 2019. © EDC

The culture vision  
for Ebbsfleet  
Garden City is one  
of wide-ranging  
participation in  
‘everyday arts and  
culture’ and curated  
cultural experiences  
that bring joy and  
inspiration to  
people’s lives.

# Arts, culture & placemaking in Ebbsfleet Garden City

Our perception of what arts and culture are, is often shaped by those who professionally make, present and fund it. Yet at the most personal level in our everyday lives – from our own experiences and wider influences upon us – it fundamentally shapes our emotional, intellectual and physical life.

Arts and culture are integral to our lives, not something simply handed down to us. From the design of the products we use to cooking and the sharing of food and the music that forms the soundtrack to our lives, we are in continual interaction with it. It gives voice to our feelings and aspirations about life. Culture matters not because someone tells us it does, but because it is a defining feature of what it is to be human. It holds a powerful place in our daily existence and the story of our life.

Evidence shows its transformative power and value to individuals, families and communities comes alive through our active involvement with it – as participants and makers of creative work. It is in the doing and engaging that its life-changing powers truly ignite.

We intend to use this power and its everyday value to the benefit of citizens in Ebbsfleet Garden City.



Artist Nicole Mollett delivering creative workshops with families at Castle Hill Summer Fete, August 2019. Image © EDC

We will seek to positively impact placemaking and people's health, wellbeing and civic life through it; to shape the growth of the city; to create the opportunity for new skills and lifelong learning. We will seek to bring joy to people; to generate a heightened sense of community with new, shared collective experiences for those who choose to make Ebbsfleet their home or place of work.

# Vision

A fusion of cultural facilities into the built environment, the provision of everyday cultural engagement and learning opportunities, and the presence of artists in the community, will foster a unique identity – an ‘active Ebbsfleeter’. It will contribute to the distinctive and valued experience of living in Ebbsfleet and North Kent.







4x4 Bhangra Youth Club performing at 'The Gathering' March 2019. © EDC.

Participation in culture will contribute to creatively engaged citizens. This will support happier, healthier and fulfilling lifestyles, commitment to local community life and foster a wider civic identity.

Encouragement to the creative industries will stimulate job growth in Ebbsfleet and North Kent that can support the local and regional economy and contribute to the national industrial strategy.

Central to this vision is a creative partnership between local citizens, artists and cultural organisations. This will utilise the skills of artists and cultural professionals to meet ambitions defined by local citizens and seek to extend the imagination, curiosity and horizons of the local population.

We intend to realise this vision through three strategic priorities:

**1. A community-led cultural programme:**

Encouraging genuine community ownership and leadership in a 'creative partnership'

with artists and cultural agencies. Specifically, comprising a programme to encourage individual and community engagement and involvement; the formation of a community culture group to lead the development of our culture vision; an arts and crafts participation programme and an expansion of Edible Ebbsfleet into an integrated growing, cooking and healthy eating movement.

**2. Co-locating and integrating cultural facilities into community buildings and outdoor spaces:**

Facilitating places for creative activity across the city – for instance, integrated maker-spaces, dance studios, stages and community gardens into health, learning and community facilities.

A key element of the cultural facilities priority is providing opportunities for artists and cultural organisations to site their work, practice and skills into the heart of new community facilities. This will include forming 'creative clusters' that seek to support creative partnerships between citizens, artists, cultural professionals and the wider creative industries.



The aim is to root everyday arts and cultural activity into the fabric of the city and enable the growth of the community leadership and the cultural programme.

In time, we will seek to bring forward beacon cultural facilities that serve particular creative practices as part of a process that responds to community need, demand and requirement that does not replicate existing facilities in the wider area of Dartford and Gravesham.

### 3. Developing life and work skills:

Art and culture's role in driving the capacities and skills of the creative industries

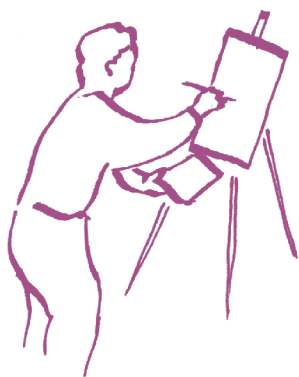
highlights its potential as a future catalyst for job creation, economic prosperity and inclusive growth. Alongside wider strategies on education, skills and economic development we will generate creative learning opportunities for local citizens through workshops, activities and specifically tailored projects.

Alongside our cultural programme we will develop a work skills project to support local young people impacted by poverty and complex needs with opportunities to develop transferable skills with culture and creative sector partners. Working with existing projects, creative organisations and the FE sector we will extend this programme over time to serve the needs of the local community.

# Realising the Vision

Realising this vision for culture and living the values and approaches that will make it a success requires the immediate development of a community-led cultural programme; inspiring citizens and artists to devise and deliver it, and cultural facilities to support its delivery.

The wider benefits to Ebbsfleet Garden City and the longer term impact on individual participants, will happen as a result of doing this work. Our approach to deliver the culture vision requires mobilising community champions and a programme, in order to cultivate a personal identity of an active Ebbsfleeter, a sense of belonging, and a dynamic 21st Century garden-city that nurtures personal agency and wellbeing.



Our journey for delivering placemaking  
through the culture vision:



## Establish

A culture programme  
A network of cultural practitioners  
Cultural facilities

## That Cultivates



An active Ebbsfleeter identity  
Surprise and wonder  
Belonging  
Exciting public spaces



## Which Nurtures

Wellbeing, health and resilience  
A creative start-up culture  
Personal agency, community voice and community agency  
A dynamic 21C garden-city identity  
Increased stakeholder support & value

# Our Values & Approaches

**‘The goal of the culture vision is successful placemaking.’**

Evidence shows that active participation in arts and cultural activity can make a significant contribution to the development of place for those living and working in a

city. It can build community bonds and cohesion, support individual health, wellbeing and resilience and foster civic identity.

For any of these wider benefits to be realised it is vital that cultural engagement is authentic and driven and owned by participants. At the heart of successful community-building programmes are core behaviours and development approaches that build trust and ownership over time – such as sustained commitment to listening, and building significant community voice into decision-making practices.

We will promote approaches to culture in Ebbsfleet that support community building and leadership and encourage meaningful cultural activity to aid placemaking rooted in the creative partnership between citizens, cultural practitioners and artists.

These approaches are an expression of Ebbsfleet Development Corporation’s values of leadership, legacy, learning, collaboration, engagement and innovation.



## These approaches are:

- Start with everyday arts and culture – developing cultural activities that build-out from people's own interests, serve the goal of community development and generate community cohesion.
- Share decision-making on the development of the programme, curatorial decisions and co-construction of creative work between artists, participants, stakeholder agencies and wider citizens, generating social capital and personal and community ownership.
- Focus on engaging and learning through 'doing' – from 'go see' trips and learning new life and work skills for disadvantaged young people to making artistic work with school pupils and families.
- Promote joyful experiences – activities that seek to inspire and excite.
- Create opportunities to explore and progress cultural interests and life-long learning in neighbourhoods – creating connections to, and relationships with place.
- Create 'wow' moments – generating imaginative civic events and curated projects with artists and the community that inspire people beyond their known experiences.
- Invest in work inspired by place - rooting new artistic work in stories of, and inspired by, the people and place of Ebbsfleet, its surrounds and North Kent.

# Our Commitments

We will establish:

Ongoing community-led culture programme comprising action plans for the development of:

- Meaningful citizen and civic involvement, a community culture group and a creative partnership with cultural practitioners and artists to lead the programme.
- A programme of arts and crafts workshops, activities and civic events.
- A community gardening, food growing and cooking movement – Edible Ebbsfleet – cultivating community through growing, cooking and sharing.



A strategy to co-locate and integrate cultural facilities into community buildings and outdoor spaces comprising an action plan for the development of:

- Prototyping and developing principles and approaches that can inform forthcoming development.
- Specific proposals for arts and cultural facilities including community gardens, kitchens and café facilities.
- Incentivising artists and cultural organisations with creative facilities, bespoke work-life spaces and opportunities to interact together through creative incubator and micro-business spaces.
- Links to wider North Kent initiatives and regional, commercial and creative sector networks.

A life and work skills programme aligned to wider education, skills and economic development activity comprising an action plan for the development of:

- Introductory 'T' skills through cultural and creative sector activities.
- A progression framework for activities over time .
- 'Work preparedness' through 'learning by doing'.

The development of Ebbsfleet Garden City is an opportunity to craft a dynamic 21st Century garden city identity through the active use of culture through the ingredients of arts, crafts, land-based activity and healthy eating.

This vision seeks to do that. It aims to generate a foundation on which current and future generations can build personal agency, community voice and a stake in a civic identity and built environment that attracts people to live, work and engage, together.

We have already started, and intend to do more. This vision will guide that work. We will bring forward working strategies in 2019/20 to realise the three priority areas with short and medium term action and investment plans.

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