

Running Order Tonight

6:00 - 6:30 - Guests arrive/drinks - **The bar is open!!!!**

6:30 - 6:40 - Cultural & Heritage Strategy Presentation

6:40 - 6:50 - Tollesbury Creative Scene

6:50 - 7:00 - The Paper Birds

7:00 - 7:10 - Burnham Art Trail

7:10 - 7:20 - Maldon Art Trail

7:20 - 7:30 - Comfort break

7:30 - 8:30 - Discussion on priorities and proposed projects/actions over food

8:30 - 9:30 - Networking and drinks - **The bar is open!!!!**



Culture and Heritage Strategy

An opportunity to look at culture, heritage (and environment and tourism) holistically – how important they are to the District, and what we can do to improve resilience of local groups, organisations and creative practitioners

The role of the Council and its partners

Funding, governance, specific projects, networks, and thinking about the future beyond local government reorganisation and devolution

Key projects and where support is needed

Focus on what makes Maldon District different and distinctive

Linking culture, heritage and environment (and regenerative tourism where relevant)

For this evening – what the cultural and creative sectors would like to see happen in terms of projects, funding, support, promotion, advocacy and networking



Focus on Local Assets

A priority in a large rural area, but also in towns, is to recognise the importance of local assets – village halls, pubs, libraries, heritage sites, community spaces etc.

Often used for cultural/heritage and community activities – and if not, then they could be

Mapping and understanding the important local spaces is important to our work – maintain and support what is already in place

There may also be opportunities to identify larger capital projects and new builds

There will be local knowledge in each place as to how assets are currently utilised and how they might be better utilised

Developing a database of relevant assets – cultural, heritage, community, environmental, activities

Well over 400 on the assets (including digital) – still researching

63 Pubs – quite a few have events (some arts/crafts as well)



Cultural And Creative Assets

3 Art Trails – Burnham-on-Crouch, Maldon and Tollesbury (promoting many local artists)

6 Commercial Galleries

Blackwater Arts Society (meets at Wickham Bishops)

3 Amateur Dramatic Groups

1 Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)

Active U3A Groups (with many creative and heritage related activities)

Space at Plume School (Maldon Art Club)

5 Contemporary Music Festivals (1 Classical and Contemporary Music Festival) – and a broader range of events across the District

Parish/Town Carnivals



Maldon's Culture and Arts – Opportunities and Challenges

A good number of practicing artists

Good established Amateur Dramatic Groups

Some good options for people wanting to take part in creative activities

Organisations like the U3A and Blackwater Arts Society, Maldon Art Club, organise events and support people to take part

Need to strengthen links between education and the arts

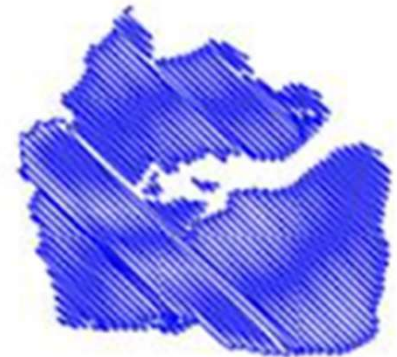
Collaboration demonstrated through the Art Trails at Maldon, Burnham-on-Crouch and Tollesbury

Good number of privately owned galleries, public & pop-up spaces, but no significant public gallery or arts space in the District

Some interest in creating new creative studio space/residency space

Not much funding coming into the District from core funders – could look at more creative health models and other sources of income (no UKSPF went directly into creative sectors for example)

Potential for support through new Saltmarsh Coast Tourism Group CIC – but need cultural sectors to engage



Funding

- Data from ACE suggests only 3 successful applications for ACE funding in last 2 full years in Maldon District
- Funding is competitive currently – but still opportunities for projects that meet the ACE Outcomes (and Investment Principles where relevant)
 - Creative People – Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life
 - Cultural Communities – Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture
 - A Creative and Cultural Country – England’s cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international
- More funding for heritage



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Maldon's Heritage

So much in the built environment across the District

Great stories and history (Battle of Maldon etc.)

Many different organisations and groups – but perhaps lacking some coordination and sense of direction (perhaps more hyper-locally focused)

Increase District-wide (or specific place-wide) collaboration to make the most of collections, information, exhibitions, themes

Need to improve buildings and archiving/storage

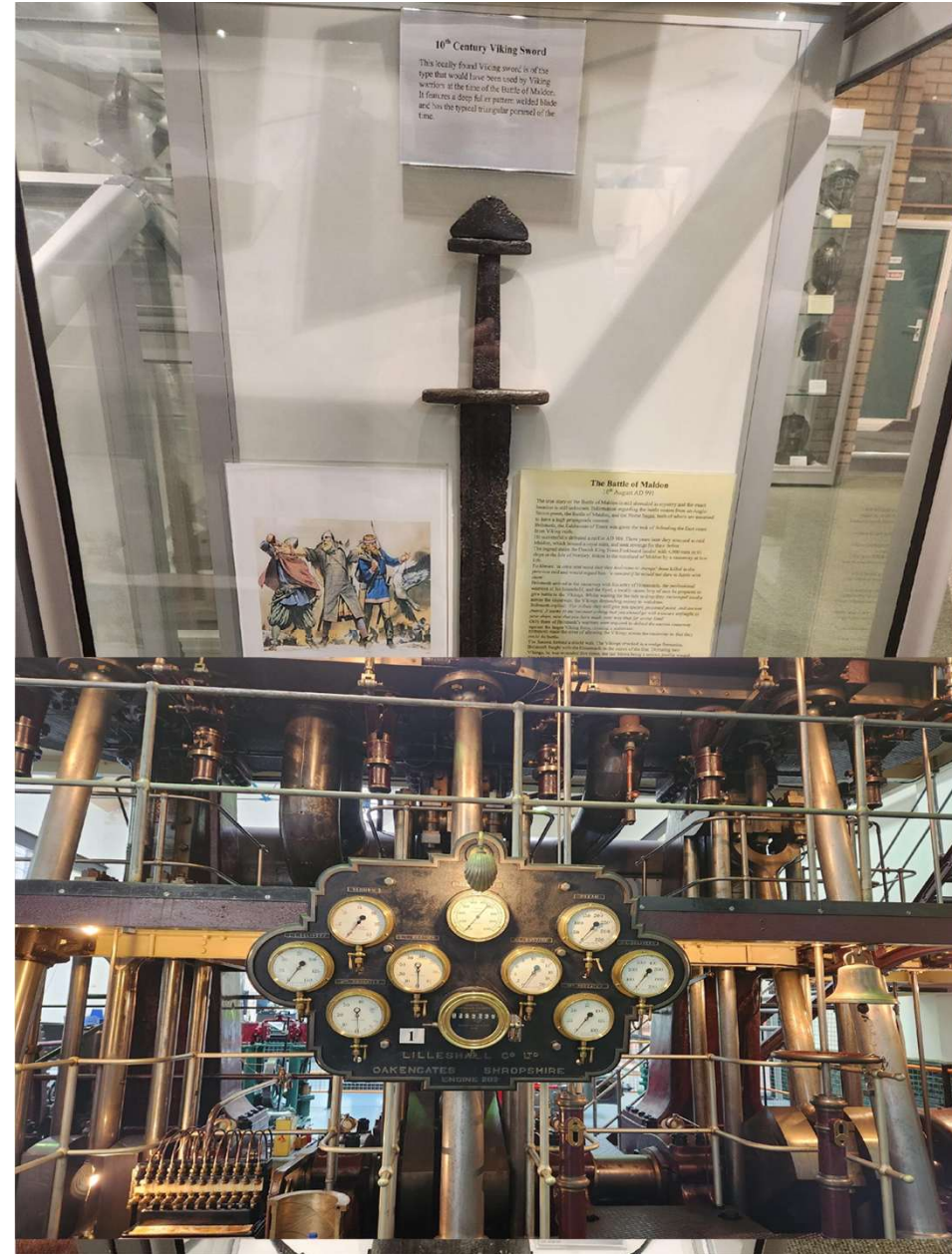
Archaeology an important issue across the District

Mainly volunteer based – a challenge

Events like the Maldon Festival, Heritage Open Days are a good opportunity for collaboration and supporting exploration of the District's heritage and environment

Heritage important to the tourism sector and wider economy

Increased collaboration between cultural/arts sectors and heritage organisations could be an opportunity



Nature and Environment

The District has many environmental sites and places – coastal, rural and urban

Some very important spaces for nature (and nature recovery) as well as for visitors – some very wild and remote spaces

Nature can inspire culture and art – National Trust commissioned work to engage people with Northey Island ‘Conversations with the Sea’

Nature good for health – need to connect more people with their local environment

Local Nature Recovery Strategy – needs broad community and local group involvement – how can cultural activity and projects inspire and facilitate this?

Significant resources required to maintain sites and much reliance upon volunteers

Major landscape projects ongoing – Blackwater Partnership



Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy

To achieve ambition - mass engagement will probably be necessary with activist communities across all areas of Essex

‘To encourage local communities across Essex to actively engage in restoring, managing and protecting nature in their areas’ – One of Top 10 Aims in LNRS

‘Provide opportunities for stakeholders to actively participate in project activities, such as volunteering for habitat restoration workdays, participating in citizen science initiatives or attending public meetings and forums.’

This is not ‘business as usual’ – needs a new system and ongoing programme of inspiration (and stories)

LNRS a ‘muse’ for creative exploration and imagination – critical importance of the cultural sectors to facilitate engagement and action (need to get artists/creatives/heritage groups involved)



Creative Health

- Concept growing in relevance – taking part in **cultural/creative and heritage related activity** can support good public health outcomes – particularly relevant to mental health and reducing social isolation
- Affordable public health solution and can strengthen the cultural/heritage sectors
- **Culture and Heritage Strategy** will consider opportunities at a strategic and local level (where possible) – creative health has relevance over the coming years with an increasing interest in ‘prevention’ and a more localised/neighbourhood focus with bigger CVS role (NHS 10 Year Plan)
- Working with Maldon CVS to develop a programme to engage with the Neighbourhood Health Planning process - held event on the 13th March to explore how to develop and embed creative health in policy and explore taking action
- Will develop a plan for the next few months

Creative Health Review

How Policy Can Embrace Creative Health



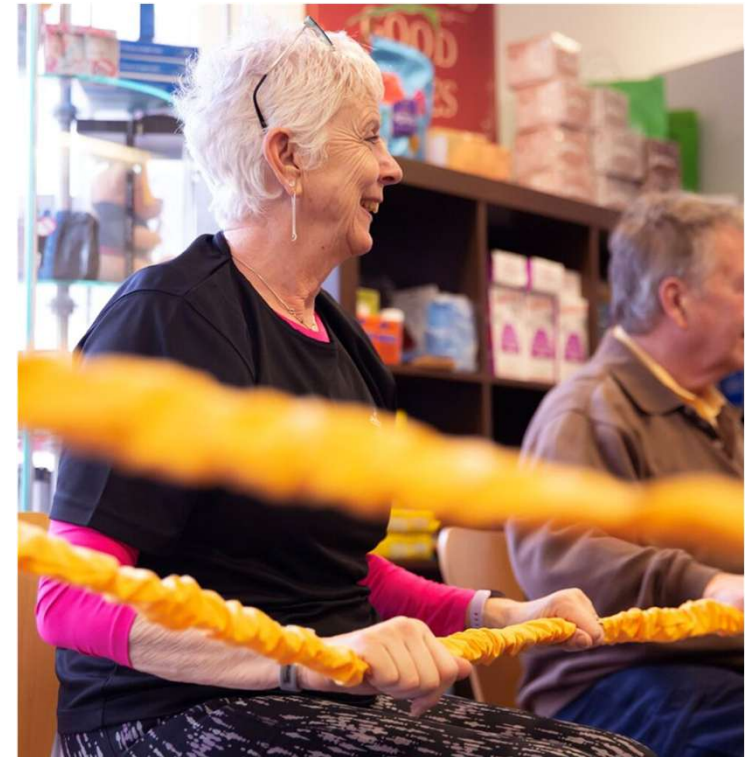
What is Creative Health?

‘Creative health activities can include visual and performing arts, crafts, film, literature, cooking and creative activities in nature, such as gardening; creative health approaches may involve creative and innovative ways to approach health and care services, co-production, education and workforce development.

Creative health can be applied in homes, communities, cultural institutions and heritage sites, and healthcare settings. Creative health can provide tools for engaging with communities that often do not get a voice and support a better understanding of the issues they face.’

Creative Health Toolkit – National Centre for Creative Health:

[Creative Health Toolkit | Home](#)



Creative Health in Essex

Report published in March 2025 at event in Chelmsford – hosted by Essex CC

Mapping of creative health activity across Essex, policy recommendations and case studies

Recommends **‘integrating creative health into broader public health strategies’** which could ‘significantly enhance health outcomes and develop more resilient, connected communities across Essex’

Essex Creative Health Network – developing with a range of partners – but needs good buy-in from Essex CC Public Health, local Health & Wellbeing Boards and NHS/ICB – but good progress in terms of awareness and sector collaboration



MAPPING CREATIVE HEALTH IN ESSEX

Exploring the Role of Creativity in Health and Wellbeing

This report prepared for Essex County Council
Five Lives - March 2025



Creative Health and Wellbeing – Arts Council England

'We believe that creative health and wellbeing has a role to play at every level of public health in this country'

Opportunity to embed collaboration with creative sectors working through ICBs

Place

Practitioners

Partnerships

People

Integrated Care Systems or public health as members on local cultural partnerships

Creative and cultural representatives on Integrated Care Systems' boards

Increased investment opportunities for the sector in local settings and skills development for creative practitioners

Could look to develop projects in Maldon District – will need collaboration with health sectors/VCS



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
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Arts Council can fund pilots and some initiatives – but they can't fund it all

UK Town of Culture – Maldon

Supported by Maldon District Council – a sign of increasing cultural confidence

Focused on Maldon Town – but would have benefits to wider District

Significant competition from across UK – so chances of winning a probably small

But should enhance appetite for cultural programming and support for cultural, heritage and environmental sectors

EOI Submitted – focusing on key themes including ‘Origin Stories’, ‘Events of the Future’, ‘Preserving’ and ‘Town and Climate’



UK TOWN OF CULTURE

Saltmarsh Coast Tourism CIC

Developing a 'regenerative tourism' concept – where tourism and the visitor economy continue as economic drivers of the economy while also contributing to sustainability of culture, heritage and tourism

Building on years of tourism development and partnerships

Networking between organisations and sectors

Creating a new organisation to oversee 'regenerative tourism' long-term (beyond local government reorganisation)

Focus on nature recovery (the environment of the Saltmarsh Coast is everything)

Local products, food/drink and experiences

Stay local (overnight stays put more money in the local economy)

Preserving, conserving and interpreting heritage and culture – supporting a distinctive tourism offer (for locals and visitors)

Communities recognise the benefits of tourism (not always the case currently)



Regenerative Tourism – Concept

The cultural, heritage and environmental offer of the Maldon District supports tourism - along with hospitality, food and drink

This all supports local distinctiveness – something different about the area

It is right therefore that we consider how tourism (in all forms) can contribute to sustaining the assets upon which it relies upon – heritage, culture, environmental as well as local independent businesses

Assets can be physical places and spaces – or a sense of place, remoteness, myths and stories

This is the concept at the heart of Regenerative Tourism – that it sustains the things upon which it relies

How the ‘regenerative’ system works all partners need to collaborate on over the coming months and years

Culture & Arts will be an important ‘Steering Group’ that feeds into the wider Regenerative Tourism Strategy for the Saltmarsh Coast – under the new Saltmarsh Coast Tourism Group CIC

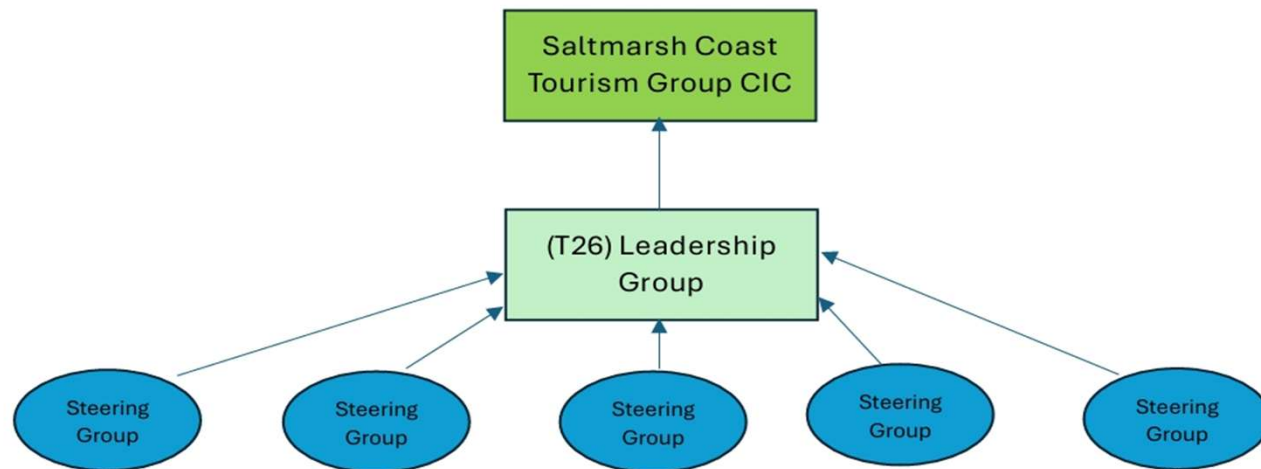
Ensure that environment is recognised as critical to all other outcomes



Culture & Arts Steering Group

Culture and heritage funding is challenging, with fewer traditional funding opportunities limiting capacity and requiring new strategies for securing investment. This along with a need to continue developing audiences and broader engagement means that collaboration with other sectors could support new ways of working and funding.

The cultural and arts sectors (including all sub sectors and genres) need to have influence on a range of issues relating to investment, promotion/marketing, collaboration, input to local government policy – the Steering Group can support this





Border of East London to Tollesbury and Bradwell – varied geography and urban/rural/coastal context

Chelmsford the main administrative centre and largest place

Brentwood also has large urban areas

Greater Essex Devolution

- The combined authority is not a service delivery body, like a council. It is a strategic body that will be tasked with supporting economic growth across a whole economic area (Greater Essex) using powers and funding devolved from central government
- Direct relationship with Government – and with new unitary authorities (and other organisations)
- Essex CC, Southend City Council and Thurrock Council are working on the operating model, constitution and governance framework to ensure the organisation is ready to deliver from the outset – Chief Executive appointed (will be replaced by Mayor in 2026)
- Priorities will ultimately be identified through a Local Growth Plan
- Recently the Government announced that ‘culture’ is to be made an official responsibility for Strategic Authorities for the first time under an amendment to the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill – an important move and means that local organisations need to represent the interests of the sectors effectively



Potential initiatives – Culture and Arts

Improved collaboration between cultural & art practitioners – Networking events (where they are wanted)

Support more cultural & arts events, exhibitions & shows – help the District Council deliver on TOC legacy

Establish the Steering Group as part of the Saltmarsh Coast Tourism Group CIC

Funding for the sector – improve the rate of investment by Arts Council and other funders – deliver funding workshops (and support collaboration across sectors)

Nature writing events – reflection on national and local themes and issues and highlighting the environment of the Maldon District (Saltmarsh Coast)

Engagement with Maldon Festival and Saltmarsh Coast Walking Festival (building on existing relationships)

Rural and farming events – Local Food and Drink events or exploring agriculture and environment

Annual ‘Culture & Arts Summit’ for the Maldon District, linking to key projects, and how investment can be secured etc.....

Support & fund Art Trails and support for more associated events (where relevant)

Place culture & art in the heart of Local Neighbourhood Plans (improved spaces for practice, studios, exhibitions etc.)

Marketing / Sponsorship / Diary Coordinatation

Creative Health – support the sector to engage with health/wellbeing sectors and secure investment

Special Arts and Music Event in Summer 2027

Maldon District Council approved funding to support an event for Summer 2027 focused on bringing in major artist with local connections

Opportunity to deliver on a 'community' focused event that showcases local talent and cultural diversity across the District

Festivals are a key feature of the cultural and community scene in Maldon District – but could there be a greater focus on cultural development locally (particularly where there is public investment and/or good commercial partnerships)

More information to follow.....



Discussion Points - Questions



How to increase the profile of the cultural sectors across the Maldon District?

How to drive participation (and increased diverse participation) in creative pursuits?

Are there opportunities for increased Networking and sharing events?

Could they focus on themes such as funding, collaboration, health etc.?

Where are the opportunities for greater collaboration between cultural/ arts sectors?

Is this needed across the District, or is it better to be more localised?

Are there opportunities for increased collaboration with environmental and heritage sectors?

More commercial investment?

Taking part in the Steering Group for the Regenerative Tourism Strategy (Saltmarsh Coast CIC) – How to ensure the sector is well represented?

