

CHILMINGTON

CREATIVE

CHILMINGTON

**A STRATEGY TO EMBED
ARTS, CULTURE AND
CREATIVITY WITHIN THE
LIFE OF CHILMINGTON**

CHILMINGTON

An aerial photograph of a large-scale residential development. The image shows a winding road that curves through a landscape with green spaces, trees, and a water feature. In the background, there are more buildings and a city skyline. The overall scene is a mix of natural and built environments.

“OUR PARTNERSHIP VISION FOR CHILMINGTON IS FOR A THRIVING AND BUSTLING NEW COMMUNITY OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY, WELL DESIGNED AND NATIONALLY ACKNOWLEDGED AS AN EXEMPLAR GARDEN VILLAGE. CHILMINGTON WILL STAND OUT AS A BEACON ACROSS THE COUNTRY DUE TO THE SIGNIFICANT SCALE AND QUALITY OF ITS OPEN SPACES; ITS EXCEPTIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS THROUGHOUT; AND MOST IMPORTANTLY – THE STRENGTH AND COHESIVENESS OF ITS COMMUNITY.”



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INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Chilmington Management Organisation (CMO), I am pleased to be introducing Creative Chilmington, an arts and culture strategy to emerge and evolve with the growing communities of this new development over the next twenty odd years. This strategy responds to the growing cultural economies within Ashford Borough and will ensure that community arts are central to the many projects and programmes being delivered by the CMO, the Council, development partners, voluntary organisations and residents themselves.

Across Kent the strategic value and multiple benefits of art and creativity are being recognised through ambitious partnership initiatives. The importance of partnership is reflected in a unique governance and stewardship model for Chilmington. Critical to the delivery of the Creative Chilmington strategy is the Delivery and Implementation Board. It is formed of key decision makers working in collaboration to uphold the Chilmington Quality Charter and to resolve any delays in meeting the enterprising aims of this sustainable garden village.

The CMO Board recognise the importance of culture in the shaping of place, promoting positive behaviours, health and wellbeing, therefore we believe it is imperative that we deliver a series of tangible outputs from this strategy that can become community-owned focal points to be celebrated. To do this, we will be working directly with existing arts and community groups and with residents to shape programmes of activity that address local interests whilst stimulating creative economies. We know that the arts sector adds more than £10 billion per year to the UK's GDP – a great source of employment and revenue generation, however, we will need to work closely with strategic partners, such as Arts Council England, to fund early projects that foster the right ecology for the arts to thrive.

For the journey ahead, I look forward to working with the CMO Board, partners and residents of Chilmington, and I trust we will find inspiration from the many cultures that find their home in this evolving landscape.

Ben Lockwood – Chair, Chilmington Management Organisation

**“CULTURE AND HERITAGE ARE
AT THE HEART OF WHAT MAKES
A COMMUNITY SUCCESSFUL.
PLACES THAT ARE PROSPEROUS
AND SUSTAINABLE, WITH HEALTHY
AND HAPPY LOCAL PEOPLE, ARE
OFTEN THE ONES WHERE THE
PLACE OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE
IN PEOPLE’S LIVES HAS BEEN
CAREFULLY CONSIDERED.”**

OUR VISION FOR CHILMINGTON

We want to embed arts, culture and creativity within the development of Chilmington, as part of a sociable and healthy neighbourhood, with diverse opportunities to participate in a creative community life that everyone can feel part of. Creative Chilmington seeks to build appetite and opportunity for active engagement in creative and cultural lives in Chilmington.



We will achieve this vision by:

- providing varied ways for people to take part in a rich creative life in Chilmington
- making a welcoming, playful and distinctive public realm, with quality artworks that add character
- encouraging the community to engage with and feel proud of their local environment
- ensuring there are places and spaces for cultural activity to take place
- helping Chilmington to become a distinctive place with a strong identity through working with creative practitioners
- commissioning contemporary public arts, inspired by heritage whilst looking to the future, as part of the new urban and green landscape
- facilitating ongoing creative community activities through partnerships

Executive Summary

Culture will play a key role as part of our ambition for the Garden Community at Chilmington. The Chilmington Management Organisation's vision, which is encapsulated in this strategy, is for everyone to be able to take part in a creative cultural life and to create the conditions for this.

This Chilmington Strategy sets out the ways in which arts, culture and creativity will be integrated within development, through proposals to grow local cultural infrastructure, for playful public arts and through building opportunities for the growing local community to engage with and take part in creative activities.

This is a long term project with incremental growth that will be delivered over more than 20 years, as housing, green space, public realm and community facilities are created.

The Chilmington Management Organisation (CMO) will govern this work. For the first five years, projects and initiatives will be managed by Ashford Borough Council (ABC) on behalf of the CMO and working with many other groups, individuals, creative practitioners and organisations over the years. Initially this will be a series of cultural and creative initiatives, which together with the generous green space and community facilities being provided, will support the overarching aim of enabling communities to thrive.

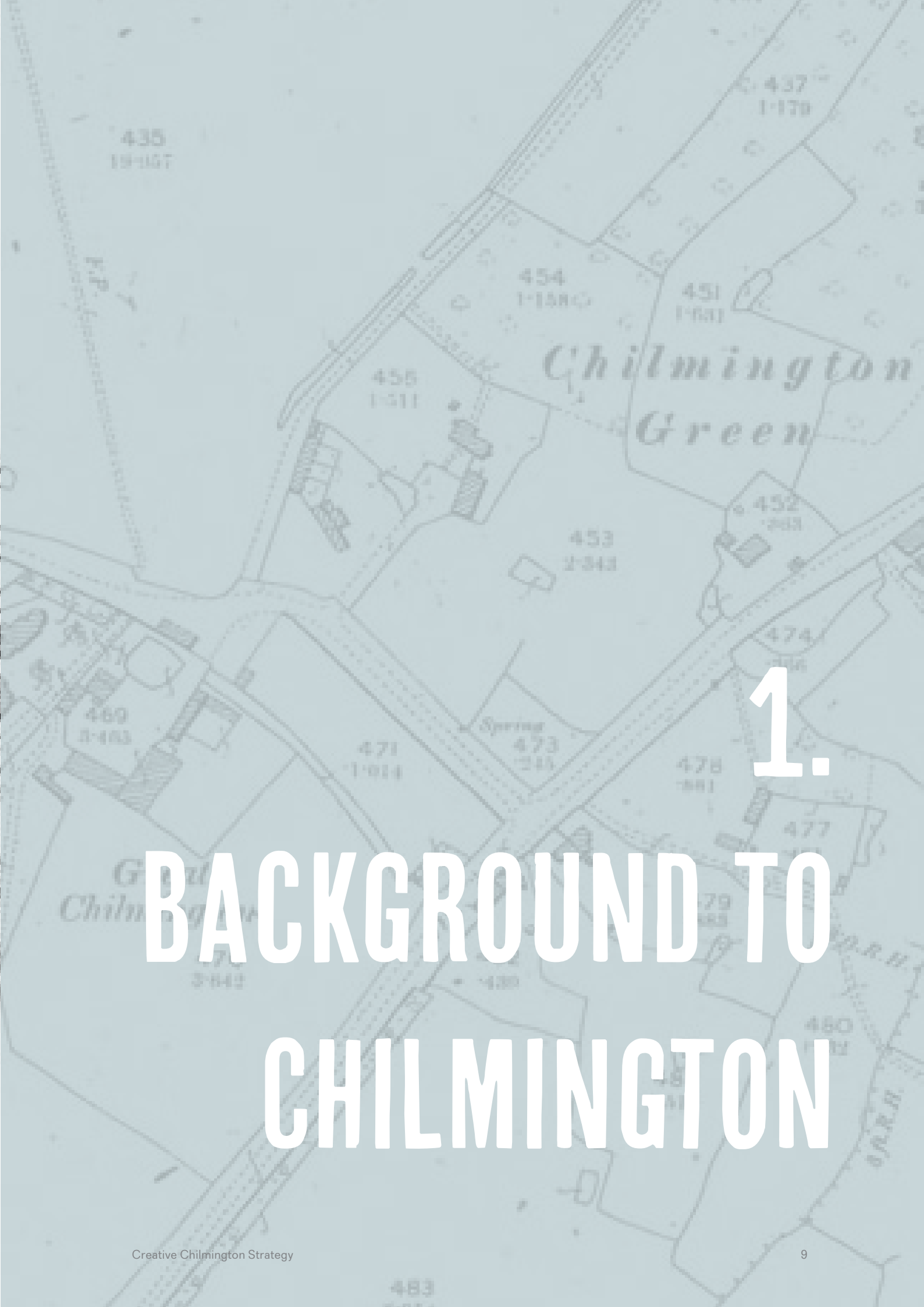
Culture and heritage are core to the ambition for Chilmington, with public arts projects included throughout the Chilmington Design Code. Ashford's Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Plan establishes the need to grow opportunities for culture and the creative industries and to increase opportunities for people to participate in both producing and taking part in culture and creativity. This aligns with the Arts Council England's new draft Strategy for the next ten years.

This document describes the many ways to achieve this including through artist commissions, creative community activity, flexible use of community facilities and provision of creative workspace. It also highlights the potential for the arts to improve lives, whether through creative projects, or creative health or education initiatives, and the benefits this brings.

As part of the South of Ashford Garden Community, Chilmington is part of a strategic network of similar scaled developments and hence part of a conversation about creating communities for the future. Culture is an important component, helping to shape not just new homes, but new community environments to feel part of.

Strong championing will be essential to ensure that the potential for a truly Creative Chilmington can be achieved. This is as critical as early exemplar projects and funding, if not more so. Advocacy will help build understanding of the wide ranging benefits of integrating creativity as part of community and place building, allowing risk taking and experimentation. Furthermore it will help to access the additional funding needed to realise ambitions that can evolve over the life of the development, as new residents move in and get involved.

**“CULTURE IS AN ESSENTIAL
INGREDIENT FOR A FULFILLING
AND RICHLY REWARDING LIFE.
CREATIVITY HELPS US TO SEE
THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY AND
UNDERSTAND OUR PLACE WITHIN
IT. A RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE
BUILDS OUR SENSE OF WHO WE
ARE AND WHERE WE ARE FROM,
AFFIRMS OUR IDENTITY AND HELPS
US TO BUILD OUR RESILIENCE AND
SELF-ESTEEM.”**



1. BACKGROUND TO CHILMINGTON

The Scheme

Chilmington is a major residential expansion of Ashford, the largest district in Kent and a designated Homes England 'Garden Village' scheme. 5750 new homes will spread across three district neighbourhoods and a new central hamlet, with building commencing in 2019.

This is the largest development project underway in the borough currently. As a result, new community infrastructure will include a health facility, community centres, a secondary school and up to four primary schools, workspace, shops and additional bus transport connecting around the area and into Ashford.

The Chilmington Area Action Plan sets out an ambition for a 'truly sustainable new community built on Garden City principles'. This indicates a commitment to supporting the development of 'a strong, engaged and sustainable community'.

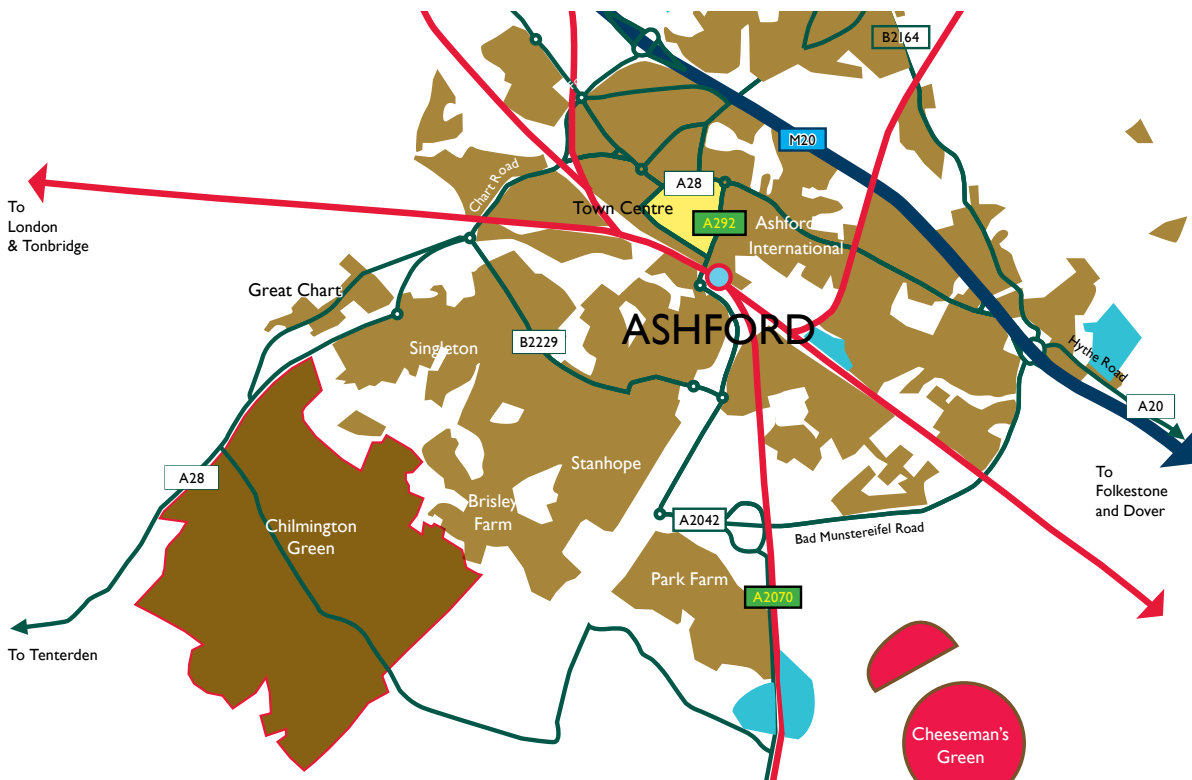
Physical development is being delivered by a consortium of private development partners led by Hodson, alongside other developers, including

Jarvis Homes and BDW (Barratt/Ward Homes).

A Chilmington Management Organisation (CMO) has been formed to manage the land and community facilities once complete, with the 'Garden Village' ethos that local stewardship will build a strong foundation for the future.

A high proportion of land will be retained as formal open space, for recreation, play and sport. A new strategic park will emphasise conserving and enhancing the natural environment, with a sports centre at the heart. These assets, as well as play spaces, allotments, community hub buildings and up to 50,000sqft of commercial space including workspace, will be owned and managed by the CMO.

We will reflect and amplify garden city principles in this strategy and the projects which flow from it.



Ashford map

Population

The 2011 census shows Ashford's fast growing population at just under 118,000. By 2017 this had risen to 127,527 (Office for National Statistics). If growth continues at this rate the population of Ashford in 2026 may be 138,400.

Ashford's population change shows the third highest growth between 2016-26 of all Kent districts. Of particular note is an increase in both younger and older groups in the coming years and that Ashford ranks 7th out of 12 towns in Kent on indices of multiple deprivation, with 1 being the most deprived. Between 2011 and 2015 Ashford's rank worsened.

Kent's population is projected to grow faster than both the South East regional average (+6.4%) and national average (+5.9%). Migration accounts for majority of the projected population increase in Ashford (and in 11/12 Kent districts).

Once the development of Chilmington is complete, an additional 12,000 to 15,000 new residents are expected to be living in the area.

This population growth forms the basis for this strategy and the need to provide for the cultural life of Chilmington's new communities.

The Local Community

A number of existing communities are already based close to and within the Chilmington boundary. Great Chart, Brisley Farm, Stanhope and Kingsnorth have a range of local facilities such as pubs and churches. Singleton also has an Environment Centre, run by Trust Volunteers through the Parish Council.

Local residents in and around the development area have been involved in consultation for many years as the masterplanning took place and planning applications have been developed. This engagement has helped to shape the plans.

The current landscape is largely agricultural with small hamlets and villages. Broadly people accept that their local community will grow and change in the coming years and the former farmland will become new residential areas surrounded by green space and with new community facilities.

This strategy will consider the needs of existing local communities and new residents and generate opportunities for community cohesion. An initial artist project by Janetka Platun has explored the area, its heritage and what it means to be part of a place in transition and engaged with many people locally.



Community art workshop at Chilmington organised by artist Janetka Platun

Ashford Heritage

There are more than 400 listed buildings in Ashford, more than in any other part of Kent, including Grade I churches and oast houses and pubs dating from the 17th and 18th centuries.

Beyond the town of Ashford, most of the borough's land area is rural, with fields, woodland and fruit orchards. Ashford has an attractive natural environment, including two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the historic environment is one of the Borough's most valuable assets. Consultation for the Ashford Heritage Strategy, developed in 2017, showed a huge affection for the rich heritage assets across the borough.

Heritage assets have always been shaped by the local environment and its people, and in turn help to shape that environment and it's communities in the future. They have a significant role to play in creating a sense of place and acting as a catalyst for regeneration.

Ashford Heritage Strategy

This strategy and the projects which follow will look to the local areas' past and current heritage to shape ideas and activity, and respect the local story of place that has grown over many centuries.

From the drovers' routes of the early medieval period to the high speed national and international railway lines of today, the location of the borough at the convergence of strategic communication routes has been instrumental in shaping its heritage.

Ashford Heritage Strategy



1876 OS Map

Chilmington Heritage

Ecological and heritage assets in Chilmington contribute to a rich environment, including ancient woodland, hedgerows, ditches/watercourses and the presence of protected species, ponds, grassland, and mature trees. Colemans' Kitchen Wood is an important ancient landscape feature, and Brisley Farm, an important Iron Age settlement where two rare warrior burials have been excavated.

A number of historic routes cross the site. An Iron Age / Romano-British route leads through Brisley Farm towards Colemans' Kitchen Wood, and a Roman Road crosses to the south of the site, connecting at Stubbs Cross Wood. Roman roads head north to Westhawk Farm and a nearby Roman roadside settlement, and east towards the Roman fort at Lympe. Other tangible reminders of Chilmington's historic landscape are in surviving lanes, footpaths and field boundaries.

Located within the Chilmington boundary, R.A.F Ashford was constructed during the Second World War and used by American squadrons.

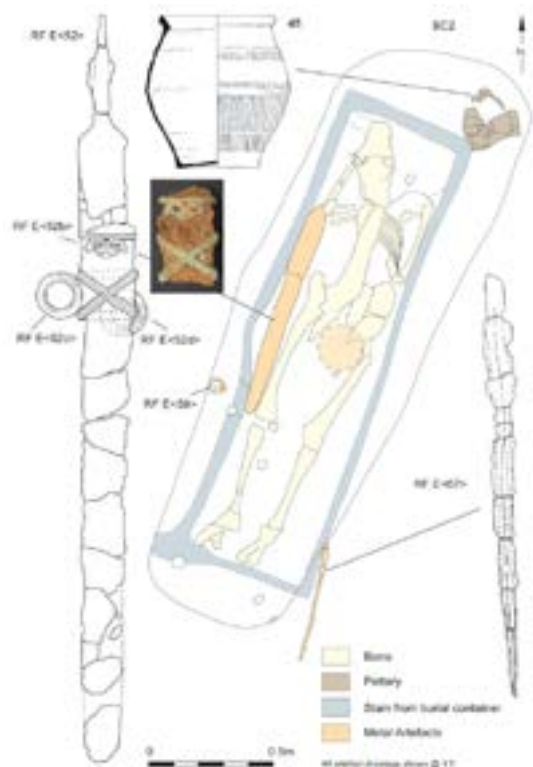
Local policy seeks to respond and retain many of these heritage assets, to contribute to the character and narrative of Chilmington as it develops, offering rich material for creative responses.

“Colemans’ Kitchen Wood, a historic coppiced woodland situated on the south-eastern tip of the Great Chart Ridge, is the most prominent within the site due to its raised elevation. Another distinctive feature is the linear woodland associated with Long Length due to its form.”
Chilmington Design Code 2016

Making local heritage visible is key to developing distinctive places. Projects will embed interesting stories through the physical fabric of Chilmington and through creative community programmes.



Aerial photograph from May 1944 and photograph of R.A.F. Ashford



Plan of warrior burial at Brisley Farm, ©Stevenson, J., 2012. Swords, Settlement and Sacred Places: The Archaeology of Brisley Farm,

Character Areas and Green Space

Chilmington has been designed around the creation of five character areas which seek to create diverse well defined neighbourhoods and a distinctive sense of place.

Significant amounts of public open space are planned as a key part of place-making and to encourage walking and cycling. Discovery Park will be a new strategic open green space with a range of sporting, recreational and play activities to benefit residents at Chilmington and those in the wider area, and to provide routes and visual links between the town and the surrounding countryside.

There will also be a range of informal and natural green space, including woodland and wetland areas, heath-land and meadow, as well as more informal space to 'kick a ball', for picnics, walking and relaxing. This green space will improve the sense of place, provide 'green corridors' and play a valuable role in nature conservation and encouraging healthier more active lifestyles.

Public realm and green spaces offer a canvas for public arts and community activity adding to the attractiveness and experience of the place.

Further garden community development is planned nearby at Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green. Whilst this strategy takes the Chilmington boundary as its main focus, these neighbouring areas will be built out in due course and it is desirable that cultural and community development at Chilmington will in time knit with the surrounding areas.

The principles for a creative community set out in this strategy, can be spread to emerging neighbouring areas to build a cohesive cultural approach to community development.

— Site Boundary

8.1 Residential

8.2 Mixed use

8.3 Secondary school

8.4 Primary school

8.6 Civic space

8.7 Community buildings

9.1 Discovery Park

9.2 Rural Edge

9.3 The Green Arc

9.4 Great Chart Ridge

9.5 Chilmington Gardens
(in the District Centre)

9.6 Chilmington Square
(located on The Avenue)

9.7 Great Chart Green

9.8 A28 corridor

9.9 Green corridors
(generally following the
line of existing
watercourses and
hedgerows)

9.10 Allotments

9.11 Sports pitches

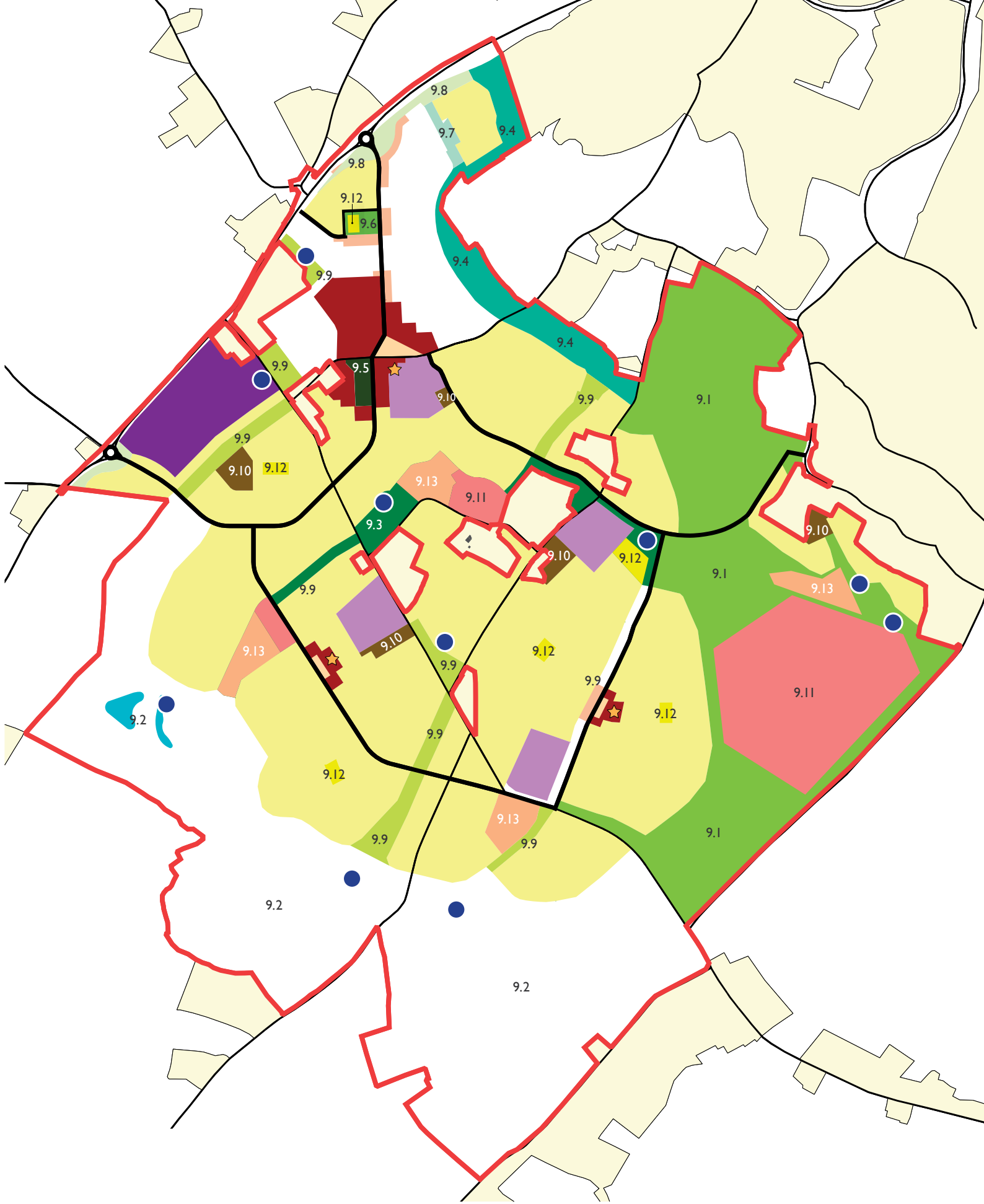
9.12 Local play spaces
(set within the
residential
neighbourhoods)

9.13 Super play spaces

9.14 SUDS (main
attenuation basins)

MAJOR
GREEN
SPACES

MINOR
GREEN
SPACES



Garden Village Status

In June 2019, it was announced by the government that the South of Ashford Garden Community, which includes the Chilmington, Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green developments, was designated Garden Village Status.

Garden villages are settlements of between 1,500 and 10,000 homes. According to the TCPA, 'like the idea of the Garden City, the garden village concept is not new. Garden villages form an important part of Britain's urban development history, and have been used to describe a range of smaller new communities built in various forms in a period stretching from the Industrial Revolution'.

Garden villages built today should apply the same original principles of building a strong foundation of industry and employment, seeking to create well designed, healthy places and affordable homes. In a 21st century context, we also seek to create vibrant and diverse communities which with the right ingredients avoid becoming dormitory commuter suburbs – the antithesis of the Garden City idea.

“Garden Cities/Suburbs are places of cultural diversity and vibrancy with design contributing to sociable neighbourhoods. This means, for example, shaping design with the needs of children’s play, teenage interests and the aspirations of elderly in mind. Creating shared spaces for social interaction and space for both formal and informal artistic activities, as well as sport and leisure activities” and where “local heritage assets will also play an important role in achieving quality and creating local distinctiveness.”

The Garden City Principles, The TCPA

If given the right support, culture can help to ensure that this new garden community can thrive.



Lightmoor Village: Bournville Village Trust

The Chilmington Design Code

Arts commissions are referenced throughout the Chilmington Design Code as key to developing cultural vibrancy and distinctive places which interpret heritage and as part of designing for the future. Creative project briefs will need to refer to the code which offers a resource for place design and heritage information; a springboard for creative interpretation and exploration of the area's rich past.

This includes Roman history, farming and orchards, a WW2 legacy and various significant archaeological finds. Archaeological investigation that can enrich our understanding of the area's history and garden community themes are both highlighted as areas for exploration in creative projects.

The Code refers to the role that well considered and coherent street furniture and lighting will play in public realm design and states that "Public art and detailing of the public realm will reflect the distinctive character of each area and also the identity of Chilmington Green as a whole."

A series of anchor and gateway spaces are identified which offer scope for arts commissions, both for permanent integrated features and for creative community activity. In particular the "High Street and Market Square will be the hub of commercial, social and cultural activities for the new community. The vision is for a vibrant, bustling multi-functional place that will share many characteristics with traditional Kentish market towns" and offer scope for creative detail to help create a "culturally vibrant place".

"The detailed design of the square should consider public art, lighting, paving, water features, seating, play, planting in an integrated way to create a cohesive design" with service provision designed in to enable flexible and low infrastructure event use.

A range of more natural green spaces will also offer opportunities for commissions connected to nature and informal play interaction, for example as part of Chilmington Gardens, Discovery Park and smaller informal areas.

Public Arts will play a key role in building cultural lives in Chilmington and will take a variety of forms, following a set of quality principles.



Chilmington Design Code Images © JTP

A new strategic park for Ashford

Once complete, Chilmington will contain a network of green spaces covering approximately half of the public realm. This will include Discovery Park (working title), a large new strategic park for South Ashford on the eastern edge of the site. The vision is for a multi-functional fun and active green space offering a range of experiences, with facilities for all age groups including sports pitches, play spaces, picnic areas, wildflower meadows and woodland walks.

With a primary focus on recreation and leisure, the park aims to stimulate greater participation in healthy activities and offer enjoyable places to play and relax. This will be a high quality distinctive environment that celebrates the natural landscape and geography of the place.

As an important and large-scale contribution to the civic life of Chilmington, the park will require its own arts strategy and budget.

The park masterplan should follow the themes and priorities of the Creative Chilmington Strategy and may focus on public arts, contemporary heritage/natural interpretation and consider how the park can function as a cultural venue.



Discovery Park plan



2. CULTURAL CONTEXT

Definitions

For this strategy we take a broad definition of arts and culture to mean the many and varied components of creative and culture activity across the arts.

This strategy embraces the varied beneficial impacts of arts and culture from place-shaping and tourism, to economic development, employment, lifelong learning and health, and for the sheer pleasure and social benefit of being part, through all stages of life.

The Arts Council's new Draft Strategy indicates the breadth of activity which sits beneath the umbrella terms of arts, culture, creativity and artist and which we have referred to, to assist with the definitions set out here.

DEFINITION:

Culture

'Culture' means many things to many people and is regularly used to refer to food, religion and other forms of heritage. This strategy takes the Arts Council definition of culture as meaning "all those areas of activity associated with: collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts". The Arts Council also acknowledge that new technologies and other societal changes alter the way that many artists and creative professionals work and the ways in which culture is made and shared, as the traditional boundaries between and around cultural activities are disappearing.

Source: Arts Council England

DEFINITION:

Creativity

"We use 'creativity' to mean the process through which people apply their knowledge and intuition to make, express or imagine something new or individual to the creator."

Source: Arts Council England

Creativity is present in all domains of life, whether singing in the shower, making a friend a cake, growing plants or taking photographs.

DEFINITION:

Community

By community we mean people who live, work or study in or regularly visit Chilmington or nearby, across all generations.

DEFINITION:

Artist

By artists we are referring to professional creative practitioners who may work across a variety of artistic disciplines such as visual arts, performance, photography, creative writing or film, dance, design or craft and who have relevant experience of working in community or public realm settings.

The Case for Culture

“Culture and heritage are at the heart of what makes a community successful. Places that are prosperous and sustainable, with healthy and happy local people, are often the ones where the place of culture and heritage in people’s lives has been carefully considered.”

Regenerating places and communities through culture - TCPA 2013

“Business relocation decisions are increasingly influenced by quality of life indicators such as the cultural and social environment for their staff and workplaces, with these factors recently indicated by global business leaders as more important than housing, transport and schools.”

Ashford Arts & Cultural Industries Strategy Report, 2016

Much has been published including evidence-based research, which establishes the positive role of arts and culture in the development of healthy, balanced and sociable neighbourhoods. We set out some of this and emphasise the importance of local advocates to create change. Vocal passionate champions can spread understanding and maintain focus, bringing as much impact as early funding or projects.

As well as its role in thriving communities, arts and culture is important for making places appealing and distinctive to live and work.

Economically, in relation to regeneration, “being located in an area with twice the average level of cultural density could be associated with an average £26,817 increment on the value of housing.” Centre for Economics and Business Research for Arts Council 2013.

National, regional and local policy supports provision of cultural infrastructure and funding to allow people to take part in active creative lives.



Ideas Test, Sittingbourne 2019

The Case for Culture

The importance of integrating cultural opportunity within new development is established across national, regional and local policy.

The CMO can draw on this supporting policy resource to make a case for culture within Chilmington when applying for external funding.

Culture is a key economic driver for the UK, earning nearly "£90bn in 2015, more even than our successfully spectacular automotive sector.... Two million people employed in all parts of the UK, a quarter of a million businesses." Greg Clark, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 2017

The National Planning Policy Framework includes the need to provide for the "cultural wellbeing" of communities.

The DCMS recognises the positive difference "that culture has on children's education, and the profound relationship between culture, health and wellbeing. Everyone should have the chance to experience culture, participate in it, create it, and see their lives transformed by it." The Culture White Paper DCMS. 2016

The Arts Council England's new strategy will be published in 2020. This will "extend and develop support for our country's artists, curators and librarians, cultural organisations and their workforces, and the communities they serve." The focus is on equality of access to culture which is high quality and relevant to people, and for everyone to be able to have cultural lives. "We want communities in villages, towns and cities up and down the country to experience the benefits of investment in culture, and we want to support children and young people to develop their creative potential to the full."

By 2027 "Kent will be a confident, vibrant county, where extraordinary cultural activity is available that enriches and transforms the lives of everyone." Culture is also an economic driver with Kent contributing to the growth of the UK's digital and creative industries. Kent Cultural Strategy 2017-27

In January 2017 the government announced its support for new 'garden villages'. These projects should include 'Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.'
Understanding Garden Villages, TCPA 2018

Ashford's Local Plan sets the ambition for more flexible spaces of different scales for professional and community arts uses "to drive innovation in the arts and the provision of excellent arts experiences".

An active and creative Ashford is one of the council's 4 key priorities in the Corporate Plan, seeking cultural experiences that support health and wellbeing benefits for all residents.

Importantly the Local Plan also requires "arts use in community hubs: helping to ensure urban and rural community hubs cater for arts and are well equipped and design to support a range of creative activity."

Ashford's Culture and Creative Industries Strategy proposes a 'Hub and Spoke' approach to developing the arts and creative industries infrastructure across the Borough. This positions Ashford Town Centre at the heart of the borough, with arts provision reaching between this hub and the borough's less urban, more rural areas.

Beyond the town centre "new communities are being created and here too an integrated approach to public art in place-making is crucial – it helps to foster identity and a stronger sense of community in the critical early years of its growth."
Ashford Public Art Strategy

Chilmington Design Code includes a range of principles for garden communities including imaginative design, cultural facilities, provision of food growing space, wildlife.

The initial Chilmington Community Development Strategy seeks to educate, engage and empower local residents and ensure a wide range of local people are involved in community building, to improve the wellbeing of those living locally.

Strategic Culture in Kent

A range of strategic cultural place shaping initiatives are raising ambition for culture across Kent, such as Creative Coast and Pioneering Places programmes, boosting local provision and encouraging new visitors to places like Margate, Folkstone and Canterbury.

Innovative festivals are building cultural tourism and reaching out to involve new audiences. Margate Now is an ambitious year-long festival taking place alongside the prestigious Turner Prize exhibition at Turner Contemporary over winter 2019/20. As part, arts engagement stretches through Kent including in Ashford.

In autumn 2020, the Estuary Festival along the Thames Estuary is led by Metal Culture in Essex and by Cement Fields in Kent who also lead the critically acclaimed Whitstable Biennale Festival of Contemporary Arts.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation is planning for culture through a new strategy and a DCMS funded initiative, This explores the co-location of

arts and community facilities with other partners as part of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, looking to identify gaps in civic provision.

Supporting all of these initiatives, Kent County Council is also focusing on skills development work to support young people into creative employment including through apprenticeships.

The upcoming SE LEP Local Industrial Strategy is a further opportunity to secure strategic funding for culture and creative industries in the county including in Chilmington..

Now with Garden Village status, Chilmington can continue to raise profile and ambition and seek to benefit from strategic funds for cultural and community development, including to realise some of the aims of this strategy and to complement and expand on Ashford's existing creative opportunities.



Thierry Bal & Michael Craig Martin © Creative Folkstone



The Gathering 2019 © Ebbsfleet DC

Arts Engagement

Whilst engagement in arts and culture is known to be higher in the south east than in the rest of the UK, averaging at 74.1%, this is not a blanket figure across the whole south east region. The 2011 Active People Survey shows arts engagement in Ashford at the significantly lower level of 44.34%. The 2015-16 survey showed an increase with 70% of people having attended an arts event, museum or gallery or spent time doing an arts activity in the previous 12 months.

In Ashford, data shows that plays and drama, followed by music are the most popular cultural activities, with 80% of those surveyed seeking entertainment and 50% to spend time with friends and family (Audience Agency).

Nationally funded programmes like Creative People and Places are carrying out focused work in areas of low participation, to increase opportunities to take part in culture and diversify the kinds of opportunities available, and are measuring the resulting engagement.

Emerging findings show that this is reaping rewards, especially so when the kinds of culture on offer reflect and relate closely to the audiences being targeted. Cultural activity needs to reflect the diversity of communities across race, gender, sexual orientation and age and this needs to be reflected in Chilmington's future programmes.

A range of opportunities that target local participation in 'everyday creativity' and with artist projects will be prioritised through this Creative Chilmington Strategy.



Anna Ray Community Workshop © People United

The younger population in Ashford is growing. With many families expected to be living in Chilmington in the future, and with at least four new schools planned, its expected that there will be lots of young people living in the area.

In their draft ten year strategy, the Arts Council notes that "opportunities for children and young people to experience culture and creativity inside and outside school are not equal across the country".

Therefore arts provision which is focused on the needs and interests of families and younger participants, and where possible designed by younger people themselves, is essential. For some of this to be on the doorstep and affordable will ensure it can be easily accessed.

Cultural provision which is accessible and relevant for older people is also needed, given the rising older population of Ashford and the increasing prevalence of loneliness and isolation across the UK. Creative projects which encourage social interaction and intergenerational contact will also help to build and enrich community life.

This strategy will champion new creative opportunities for everyone, for enjoyment, self-expression, learning and to develop new transferable skills.



© Jasmin Vardimon Company

Ashford's 'Hub and Spoke' approach to culture

Ashford's Arts & Cultural Industries Strategy Report (2016) positions Ashford Town Centre as the heart of cultural activity, with arts provision reaching out to the borough's less urban, more rural areas.

The following pages identify some of the organisations and initiatives that Chilmington could partner with. This overview offers a snapshot in time; things will change, new creative additions will bubble up and others will cease.

Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company

JVD has been based in Ashford since 2012 and is Ashford's only Arts Council England (ACE) funded National Portfolio Organisation (2018-22), and one of eleven NPOs in Kent. The company creates high quality performers and performances of a world class calibre. Internationally renowned, they develop experimental new work, collaborations and creative research, educational residencies and outreach.

In March 2019, ACE announced National Lottery funding for a "new state-of-the-art purpose-built home in Ashford" for JVD. This creative laboratory will house spaces for creation, presentation, and educational training for the company. The scheme put forward by Kent County Council, also includes light industrial units that can be used as incubator and start-up spaces for emerging local creative companies and individuals.

Further community facilities will include space for additional training courses, a Pilates and yoga studio and a café. The facilities will support the wider arts industry with a preview area for

visiting companies to showcase new work. Other companies and small creative businesses that have grown out of JVD have expressed an interest in using spaces within the borough. Together, this will add to the town's arts, health and fitness offer and contribute to the local economy.

Revelation

Revelation is an arts and performance space at St Mary's Church in Ashford town centre, which attracts regional and national touring artists and has developed a local audience. Well-known established musicians feature in the programme, as well as up and coming local bands, comedy and more. Revelation support town centre busking initiatives and take part in local festival programming.

Other organisations in the borough

Others who contribute to the local scene include Bauhaus Cafe CIC, a pop up art and music collective providing a range of exhibitions and projects, and Ashford Visual Artists who meet and exhibit a range of visual arts and crafts. Ashford Arts Centre offers a range of music and film making courses and classes. A number of Kent based organisations such as People United and Strange Cargo commission artist led creative community projects in the borough. Other local initiatives such as the Snowdogs programme help to animate the town centre.



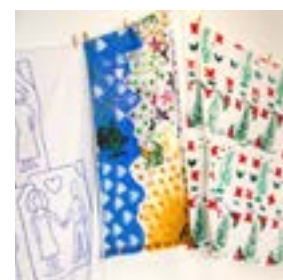
Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company, Sadlers Wells © JVD



Coachworks, Ashford © Carl Turner Architects



Ashford Snow Dogs © Ashford BC



Anna Ray Workshop © People United

Local Festivals

Local festivals bring animation, showcase local talent and provide focal points around which the local community can gather. Create Festival and Create Platform are parallel events managed by the council's Arts Team. The festival is a one day free live music event and a key community focus for the borough. Create Platform offers a week-long programme of live arts events, fringe activities and unique and exclusive experiences to Ashford. Together with other local music festivals, these platforms provide opportunities for local bands and music talent.

The Wealden Literary Festival celebrates local relationships with nature and place through literature, arts, crafts and food as well as creative workshops and hands-on outdoor activities.

Chilmington can benefit from and contribute to the growing cultural hub of Ashford by working with cultural organisations already established in the borough or by providing facilities to attract new organisations. Events programmes with local creative organisations could help to establish Chilmington as a place people actively choose to live.

Space for Growth

There is scope for more creative infrastructure in Ashford, including in Chilmington. In the town centre, the Picture House and Curious Brewery mark a notable growth in Ashford's cultural and visitor offer. A new meanwhile project, the Coachworks, offers new food, drink and event spaces and a start-up business hub.

With only one ACE NPO in Ashford, there's an opportunity to bring further quality professional provision into the borough. The Local Plan refers to the Arts and Creative Industries Strategy that highlights a lack of spaces such as galleries, multi-use art facilities, theatre and production and rehearsal spaces. "These gaps remain and

there is scope to continue to expand Ashford's professional and community arts opportunities to build a stronger local arts ecology and offer."

It also proposes a hub-and-spoke approach to the planning of arts and creative industries facilities in the borough. "By building links between cultural venues and events in rural areas, a greater critical mass of activity can be built and jointly marketed, to the benefit of all partners" (LGA Culture led regeneration 2019). In this model, centres of excellence connect with community in more rural and non-town centre areas, using multi use community facilities in those areas.

The strategy goes further, indicating that Ashford should actively promote opportunities for creative industries growth. This can include smaller scale rehearsal and production space which can be in purpose built space or share other types of community facilities and need not all be based in the town centre. In Chilmington, smaller creative production activity such as artist and craft studios or music facilities, can support the development of localised cultural offer and encourage participation.

Kent's Cultural Strategy and 'Unlocking Growth' regeneration plan commits support to for new cultural facilities in planning for new infrastructure as well as to role of culture and creative industries as a "an opportunity sector for economic development".

.....
"We will grow cultural infrastructure and activity to respond to population increase and planned housing growth."

Kent Cultural Strategy 2017-27
.....

Backed by relevant strategy and policy, the Chilmington Area Action Plan indicates that new infrastructure will include "facilities to accommodate a range of health, social and community uses". This strategy will explore what kinds of cultural infrastructure is needed and how it can be provided.

**“WE WANT COMMUNITIES IN
VILLAGES, TOWNS AND CITIES
UP AND DOWN THE COUNTRY TO
EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS OF
INVESTMENT IN CULTURE, AND
WE WANT TO SUPPORT CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO DEVELOP
THEIR CREATIVE POTENTIAL TO THE
FULL.”**



3.

OUR STRATEGY

OUR STRATEGY

At the heart of the aims for Chilmington is the creation of a healthy sustainable new community which is well-connected to the wider Ashford area.

Our projects and initiatives will be relevant to Chilmington and local communities, offer curiosity, interest and quality cultural and creative experiences, with different ways for people to be involved.

During the early years as the community begins to form, projects will set the scene and show how arts and culture can become an integrated part.



Older Peoples Arts Network © Entelechy Arts

A FLEXIBLE PLAN

A programme of community-engaged creative projects and initiatives will grow over the development timeline and build cultural capacity.

The rationale for our approach hinges on the extensive 20+ year development horizon. This means that “each successive phase of development will be likely to acquire its own character naturally, because each successive phase will be a product of its time” offering “a degree of continuity and a coherent vision, whilst permitting sufficient flexibility for it to be updated and modified as needs and priorities change.” (Chilmington Design Code).

Cultural projects will be integrated within physical and social development of the place and contribute to community building. Like the Design Code, this strategy needs to be flexible and regularly evaluated and reviewed to reflect changes over time and the needs of the evolving community. The Creative Chilmington focus areas will guide projects and seek to ensure a coherent approach to commissions.

THE PROGRAMME

Growing culture over time

It's anticipated that the approaches described in this strategy will sit across the life of the development of Chilmington.

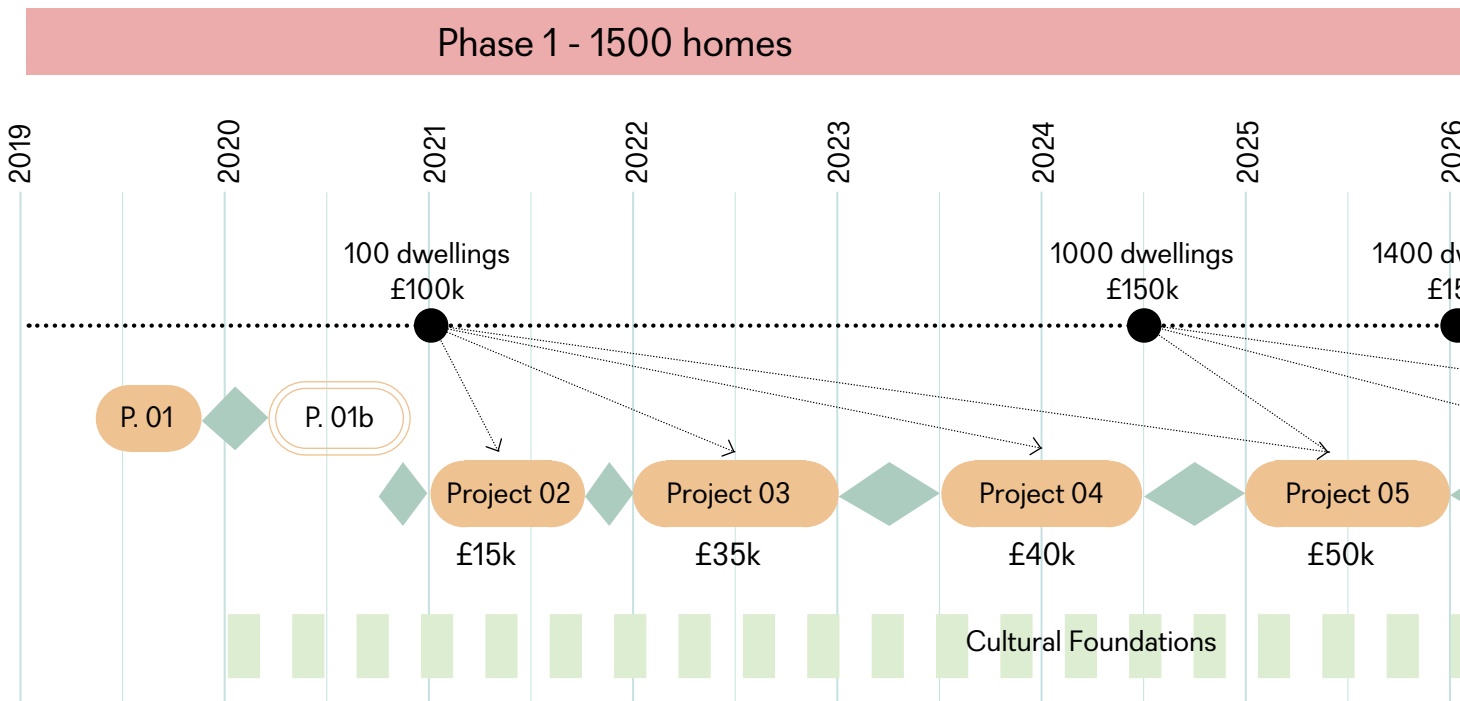
We have set out a guide to projects to be delivered during Phase One 2019 to 2025, by when it is expected that 1000 new homes will be complete, and on to 2030.

The detail of each project will be developed over time, in response to evaluation and the changing context. We will follow an iterative process of devising projects and initiatives in which artists and local communities can engage and collaborate and taking lessons from one project into the next.

At the same time we will identify ways in which cultural provision can be integrated into the development of the built and outdoor environment and as part of wider community provision such as schools, health and workspace

Funding

The delivery of Creative Chilmington arts commissions are underpinned by development funding (£106), released over the long-term as homes are built, so that commissions funded in this way will take place periodically. To maximise impact, the strategy focuses higher value projects at particular times, complemented by smaller scale activity.



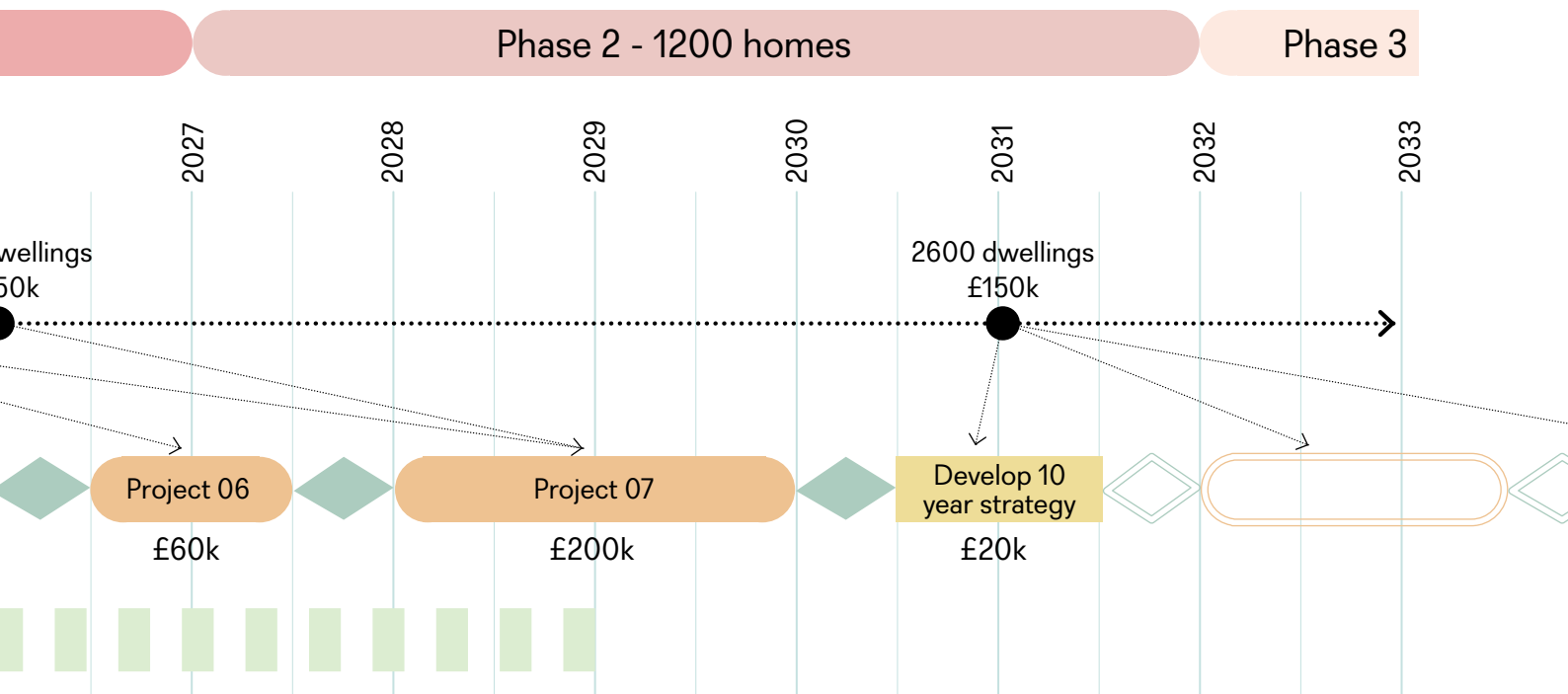
We will seek to link with Ashford's cultural offer and to other Chilmington community development work-streams, such as heritage, lifelong learning, health and physical activity.

To realise the Chilmington Design Code aspirations for public arts however, additional funding is needed, such as via S106 for street furniture, open space, wayfinding, public realm or lighting. Where possible, combining funding streams can maximise what can be achieved and at a smaller scale, some projects can generate income through creative initiatives - see case studies.

There are also opportunities to join with other strategic partners and regeneration areas, particularly in Kent, to achieve joint aims. As a substantial strategic town expansion, and a

Garden Village, whilst this strategy focuses on investing S106 funds, it is recommended to look to secure additional strategic funds to realise ambitious cultural projects for Chilmington, such as to invest in cultural spaces and/or community programmes via high street, heritage, community or business funding or other regional and national programmes.

Our broad interpretation of public arts reflects current practice, thinking and funding, and proposes bringing together artists and local communities to collaborate as part of community development. The case studies we set out illustrate a range of precedents including programmes, such as Creative People and Place, which support community cohesion, build a positive sense of community and grow local pride.



Triggers dates based on 2018 trajectory

Project budgets include project management and commissioning fees

Additional funding is likely to be needed to invest in cultural spaces and/or for the capacity to seek and realise cultural opportunities through development planning

CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVISING THE PROGRAMME

Developing a Creative Community

The arts play a valuable role in supporting community development and building cohesion. This is particularly important when existing communities and new residents need to find ways to connect over time. Arts and culture help to create and share stories which reflect the local place and its communities, personal lives and local issues, and offer powerful and engaging ways to bring people together.

Given the Community Management approach being taken at Chilmington, there is exciting potential for the community to take a lead role in local cultural development in future. This community role is an extension of the 'Garden City' ethos of community participation and ownership and aligns with evolving thinking about the civic role of the arts.

In their research, Nick Wilson and Jonathan Gross from Kings College, talk about the need for 'supportive conditions...for cultural creativity, and that these conditions extend far beyond the presence of arts organisations alone'. They write about 'everyday creativity' such as a street dance class, a local singing group or reading a book, being as important as engagement with more formal or traditional cultural experiences, and 'how the arts, creative industries and everyday creativity are not separate but deeply interconnected, enabling each other to flourish.' Towards cultural democracy: Promoting cultural capabilities for everyone.

Spaces for Culture

In order for communities to enjoy rich creative lives, local cultural infrastructure is needed. In Chilmington, this is backed up by local policy and plans. Ashford's Cultural and Creative Industries Strategy refers to Arts Council Guidance which suggests "that there is an increased need for multi-use community facilities for arts and culture which can be bespoke, created within existing community facilities or within educational establishments"

The strategy goes on to say "trends in audience behaviour and cultural production suggest that a new minimum requirement for these facilities would be high speed broadband and wireless capability and sufficient mains power to support technology such as projection and broadcast." This would "enhance the quality of life for all residents, by maintaining and enhancing the significant grassroots activity that already takes place in the Borough."

This responds to evidence in the strategy that "Outside of the town centre, community facilities that host arts and cultural activity suffer from problems regarding access to specialist equipment and services needed for holding some events."

As plans develop for new community facilities at Chilmington, consideration will be given to co-locating arts provision. Any new facilities for the arts, or facilities which may be flexibly used for arts uses, need to be designed in such a way as to be fit for purpose and with necessary service provision.

Culture, Climate and Sustainability

We believe that meeting the needs of our society without breaching the earth's ecological boundaries will demand a shift in our behaviour and culture has a role to play.

Culture offers ways to be adaptive and resilient, as part of local sustainability plans. It is a force for connecting people across their differences and inviting collaboration. Artists and designers are involved in solutions to environmental threats such as flooding and drought, and in helping us to think meaningfully about climate change.

The foundations of sustainable garden communities are about providing locally what people need to live well, with design helping to forward plan, such as for sustainable drainage, energy conservation and to support biodiversity.

At the same time, an ethos of recycling, re-use and celebrating what's local, including shared heritage, can contribute to change. Importantly young people can be helped to develop creative skills, building resilience and skills for the future.

Creative Chilmington projects will be mindful of and seek to support sustainability through the commissioning of artwork and the management of community events, including a commitment to minimise plastics use and source sustainable or recycled materials where at all possible.

Culture, Health & Wellbeing

Arts, culture and creativity can benefit community wellbeing in many ways. Through this strategy we will help to create well-designed surroundings through opportunities for playful public arts interaction and bespoke features. We will also seek to facilitate creative, social and learning activities to enhance quality of life.

Recognition of the role of arts and culture in healthy communities is becoming increasingly mainstream, with a wealth of research evidence of the tangible benefits. Organisations like the Arts Council, the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance and the DCMS are advocating investment. Social Prescribing is gaining momentum and investment. Age UK refers to the "striking impact of creative and cultural activities" on what makes life worthwhile in later life.

Such provision can make economic as well as social sense. Age UK reports that "an 'arts on prescription' service in St Helens has shown a social return of £11.55 for every £1 invested" and highlights the need for funding to run activities, places to meet and transport to get there. Partnership with local Clinical Commissioning Groups can direct investment into commissioning of cultural activity targeted at different groups.

Through Creative Chilmington, we will seek out initiatives which support people experiencing personal challenges such as mental health issues, loneliness, or isolation, through the arts..

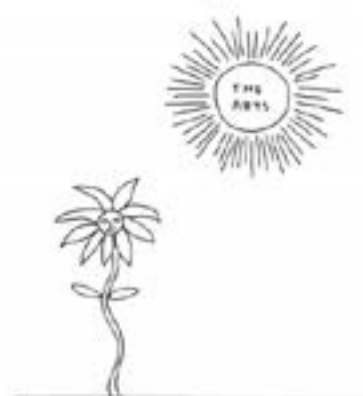


Illustration: David Shrigley

**“BY 2027 KENT WILL BE A
CONFIDENT, VIBRANT COUNTY,
WHERE EXTRAORDINARY CULTURAL
ACTIVITY IS AVAILABLE THAT
ENRICHES AND TRANSFORMS THE
LIVES OF EVERYONE. CULTURE IS
AN ECONOMIC DRIVER WITH KENT
CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF
THE UK’S DIGITAL AND CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES.”**




4.

FOCUS AREAS


FOCUS AREAS

Through the research presented earlier in the document, we have identified a number of focus areas that will shape the implementation of this strategy. We have grouped these as follows:



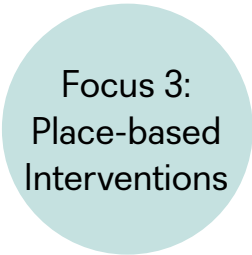
Focus 1:
Socially-
engaged

Participatory projects that encourage creativity and community building.




Focus 2:
Community
Landmarks

Large-scale playful landscape projects inspired by local heritage and interests.



Focus 3:
Place-based
Interventions

Creative artist interventions within the public realm that build local identity.



Focus 4:
Cultural
Foundations

Community provision and facilities delivered with partners.

Over the next pages these focus areas will be expanded upon. These will inspire a series of artist and other creative practitioner-led commissions which will respond to one or more of the following focus areas:

FOCUS 1: SOCIALY-ENGAGED

Whilst all our work seeks to involve our local communities in different ways, a socially-engaged focus will specifically bring artists and other creative professionals together with people living locally.

Participatory projects will be inspired by Chilmington; delving into and responding to local heritage and the ways in which places change and evolve, and responding to this. Creative projects will uncover community interests and encourage community building.

This focus will continue throughout the life of the development and ongoing as funding allows. Participatory projects could take place across the development area as appropriate to each project.

On the following pages we have identified projects that encompass the ethos of socially-engaged projects.

Focus 1: Socially-Engaged Inspiration

TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART & ARCHAEOLOGY

Guthrie & Pope, Tomorrow, Today 2014

Sculptural cob model of the North West Cambridge Development which places scale replicas of all the planned streets and buildings right next to the archaeological dig on site, working with the University of Cambridge Archaeology department. A 'model village of the future', hand-built on location and helped by local participants keen to learn and practice the skill of cob-building to create the model using a traditional, ecologically-sustainable material, primarily from the earth excavated in-situ by the archaeologists.



Photos © Nina Pope and Karen Guthrie



HERITAGE EVENT

Neville Gabie, The Dinner, 2017

Connected to redevelopment of the former Ram Brewery, where beer has been brewed continuously for almost five centuries. This participatory project was inspired by a photograph of a brewery staff Christmas dinner in 1948 at the nearby Town Hall Civic Suite. The project celebrates Wandsworth's heritage, past and present, through the recreation of the dinner party. Following a series of conversations, local community, past brewery workers and people involved in rebuilding on the site, were invited to take part in the dinner recreation. A photographic artwork documenting the event will feature on the heritage site, accompanied by a book exploring connected local stories and documenting brewery memorabilia.

Budget approx. £75k

Images © Youngs Archive

RESIDENCY

Caroline Jupp, Labour of Love, 2014-15

An artist residency in the Olympic Park and resulting publication exploring our relationship to work. Inspired by the Curriculum Vitae, meaning the course of one's life, Caroline worked from a mobile shed over four winter months to explore the career paths of park visitors. The shed was a place to talk and chronicle the twists and turns of people's working lives and to imagine work in the future. The shape and feel of the small shed encouraged intimate conversations. More than once it became a safe place to sound out choices and reflect on future possibilities.

Budget approx. £20k

Photo © Caroline Jupp 2014



"I enjoyed coming here with my nan, listening to her life stories, because she has never told me these things. It was great to hear other life stories too, because they're so different. It was a great experience to come to the shed. I also got to write and draw what I wanted to be when I grow up."

Shed visitor, age 10



MUSIC

Sea Folk Sing, Sparked Echo, 2018-19

Sea Folk Sing is a choral production in North Kent, commissioned by Ideas Test, produced by SparkedEcho. It aims to involve more older people in the arts to improve health and wellbeing, through music, singing workshops and performances.

The 2 yr programme is supported by the Celebrating Age programme, funded jointly by Arts Council England and The Baring Foundation with further funding from Kent County Council, Optivo and Involving Medway. The performances in 2018 were a partnership with Kent Community Rail Partnership, The Historic Dockyard Chatham and Medway Council.

Above: Sea Folk Sing © Therese Hammond 2018
Below: Sea Folk Sing © Greg Stobbs 2018

Focus 1: Socially-Engaged Inspiration

MOBILE STRUCTURE

Pump House Pavilion, NEON, Pump House Gallery with Chestnut Grove Academy, 2017-2018

Commissioned by Dallas-Pierce-Quintero, this temporary pavilion project was co-created by a design practice, structural engineers Elliott Wood and a local secondary school. The students selected the designers and worked with them during the design process.

The pavilion hosted a series of public cultural events as part of a local arts festival. The students were involved in programming events at the pavilion.

Budget £25k, funded through S106

Photos © St William



CREATIVE ENTERPRISE

Company Drinks, Kathrin Bohm and Create, since 2014

Company Drinks is an art project in the shape of a community interest company, an ongoing project which links the history of East Londoners 'going hop picking' in Kent to the formation of a community enterprise, which brings people together to pick, process and produce drinks in east London today.

Each year over 1200 residents from Barking and Dagenham engage through picking trips, workshops, public events and Hopping Afternoons. Now with a permanent base in Barking Park. Funded by varied public sector partners and drinks sales.

Community Picking Trip and Drinks Bottles © Company Drinks

FOCUS 2: COMMUNITY LANDMARKS

A focus on community landmarks will allow artists to explore the local area and heritage. They will engage with the local community to devise significant bespoke interventions within the landscape, which offer playful interaction and pleasure for local community and visitors

These projects are inherently large-scale and ambitious, and should be undertaken at key moments during the development timeline and when sufficient funding becomes available.

Community landmarks will be located in key sites which are identified as offering a substantial opportunity. Landmarks may be sculptural, functional, create a community hub or respond to an idea which offers particular community interest, as appropriate to each project. They will operate as focal points within the landscape.

Funding for these projects will be through S106 for Public Art, for Community Development, Landscape, Street Furniture, Play or other identified S106 source and/or external funding

On the following pages we have identified projects undertaken by others that encompass the concept of community landmarks.

2. Community Landmarks Inspiration

PUBLIC ART

Bronze House, Great Kneighton 2014 and Look! Look! Look!, National Trust, Berrington Hall 2017/18, Heather and Ivan Morison

Large scale sculptural artworks drawing on local stories and archaeology. The artists were commissioned to make works which reflect local heritage and draw people together to a unique focal point.

Look! Look! Look! is a pavilion that sits in the centre of a 18th century walled garden originally designed by Georgian landscape designer Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.

The monumental roundwood sculpture "Bronze House" sits at the centre of a housing-led development in Cambridge, and references the Bronze Age archaeology found on the site.

Photos © Studio Morison



LANDSCAPE FOCAL POINT

Viewing Tower, Flanders Moss, Scotland, Robin Baker Architects

This permanent Viewing Tower sits within a 900m board-walk commissioned by Scottish Natural Heritage over Flanders Moss bog. The tower enables elevated views over the landscape and acts as beacon on the horizon.

Budget approx. £110k

Photos © Robin Baker Architects

COMMUNITY RESOURCE

The Story Pod, Atelier Kastelic Buffey (AKB)

A community-supported lending library in the town of Newmarket, Canada; the pod, placed on the edge of a recently completed civic square, uses contemporary design to create a lively hub for gathering to invigorate the town.

During the day, two of the walls pivot open like the covers of a book, welcoming people inside or to gather around the front. Visitors can take or leave something to read, or rest quietly on the built-in seating and read. At night, the doors lock & energy efficient LED lights, powered by solar panels on the roof, glow through the lattice work like a lantern. In winter the pod is stored; a standard forklift enables easy, efficient transportation.

Photos © AKB



PLAYFUL STRUCTURE

Rampart Wave, Lyon, Base Architects

This large scale playable environment creates a stage on which predominantly children can play, climb and imagine.

Rather than offering a stand alone playable sculpture or play structure, this is a designed environment for exploration.

The structure plays upon the story of a 19th century rampart attack and is designed with risk taking, challenge and experiment in mind.



Photos © Base Architects

FOCUS 3: PLACE-BASED INTERVENTIONS

We will encourage artists to explore Chilmington and its local heritage, engaging with the local community to devise smaller scale playful public art or creative place-based interventions. Outcomes may include integrated public art, or creative wayfinding or seating which can be integrated or retro-fitted to animate the public realm and add character. These should offer bespoke playful interaction for the local community and visitors, inspired by the place.

This builds on the Chilmington Design Code which identifies the following ways that 'social/cultural' interventions can aid development:

- Provide meeting places to encourage social interaction
- Assist wayfinding by creating a local landmark on strategic route
- Create a special sense of identity for the neighbourhood
- Create a sense of identity through public art
- Provide play space with opportunities to play close to wetland habitat and learn about nature
- Raise the profile of local concerns e.g. climate change

These projects rely on suitable public spaces, so will take place when opportunities arise to enhance the public realm or green spaces and as funding becomes available. Place-based interventions may be in clusters across the scheme and at target locations where the community gather, such as the District Centre, town squares, play spaces and other focal points.

Funding for these projects will be through S106 for Public Art, Landscape, Street Furniture, Play or other identified S106 sources and/or external funding such as for heritage, arts, public realm or for community benefit.

3. Place-based Interventions Inspiration

HERITAGE TRAIL

Fixing The Link, Dallas-Pierce-Quintero 2017
Colchester

A series of way-finding, public art and public realm improvements to create a welcoming first impression on arrival at Colchester and an enjoyable walking route between Colchester station and the town centre. Inspired by Emperor Claudius's dramatic arrival into Colchester with a herd of elephants, the projects celebrate the town's rich heritage, offering visual interest, heritage interpretation and practical solutions to local wayfinding problems.

Budget £183,000

Photos © Dallas-Pierce-Quintero



PUBLIC ART

Fantastic Factology, Olympic Park, Klassnik Corporation

A series of 56 bespoke stainless steel & enamel plaques were installed on benches distributed throughout the Park each displaying a fact.

A programme of structured local events were central to the generation of content for the plaques whilst also encouraging local engagement and a sense of ownership of the park as a whole. Alongside the physical events, submissions were accepted via a specially created website & postcards.

Nuggets of varied facts will inform, inspire and entertain visitors to the Park for years to come.

Photos © Klassnik Corporation

PUBLIC ART & WAY FINDING

Fleet on Foot, Jonathan Harvey 2017

These 3d-printed replicas of Folkestone's fishing fleet were commissioned as part of the 2017 Folkestone Triennale. The fleet consisted of seven boats when it was nominated a tributary 'cinque port' to Dover in 1299. The artist's research into the history of the river Pent, now beneath Tontine Street, has led him to celebrate the seven boats currently licensed in Folkestone Harbour, and three licensed elsewhere but operating from Folkestone. Gilded replicas surmount poles that carry information about each boat, its captain and crew, and other references, whilst animating the street and aiding way finding.

Image: Fleet of Foot © Jonathan Harvey



SEATING & GREENING

A series of green islands provide moments of refuge, seating and greening to soften the public realm along a busy high road. Close working with business owners helped to develop the concept and agree final locations for the pieces created by a team of artists and designers.

Image: Streatham Pocket Commons , The Decorators
© Dosfotos

FOCUS 4: CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS

The cultural foundations focus sets out an ongoing approach to build appetite and capacity for culture and creativity in Chilmington and ways to do so, such as through spaces, programmes and partnerships. This focus places culture within the approach to planning for community provision and facilities. Spaces and activities to experience and take part in culture are needed as part.

Greater access to arts and culture is shown to improve lives whether through education, health, employment, or better connect people socially or simply for personal pleasure.

Many arts initiatives support people experiencing health challenges which may be through provision of activities such as workshops, classes, clubs or walks that are on offer locally or through targeted schemes such as Social Prescribing through the NHS and local partners.

Learning about and through culture boosts creative thinking skills, considered to be essential to future employment and supports the development of personal confidence and esteem.

We will seek to integrate culture through Chilmington's neighbourhoods as part of our wider community development work and invest through S106 or seek external funding as required.

The following examples illustrate some ways in which creative initiatives support vibrant places and lives.

4. Cultural Foundations Inspiration

ARTS CO-LOCATION WITH A SCHOOL

Oily C'Art

An award winning touring theatre company for under 5s and children with special needs is co-located with Smallwood Primary School in SW London. Oily C'art, who has worked in Ashford, has supported the school with different projects over the years including a Cultural Olympiad project in 2012.

In 2016 the company celebrated 20 years at Smallwood School by working with children and staff at to create an exciting cross-curricular project, Once Upon A Time In Tooting. The project culminated in a site-specific performance at the school and a parade around surrounding streets.



Images: © Oily C'Art



LONELINESS & ISOLATION

The Silver Social

Creative Arts East, Norfolk Library Services, Norfolk Museums Service, Breckland Older People's Forum and Norfolk County Council Public Health.

A daytime touring arts programme of creative workshops and performances, for older people in community venues across Breckland, Norfolk. Funded through National Lottery Arts Council strategic touring fund

Silver Social offers high quality, accessible arts based activities within familiar friendly local spaces as a chance to meet new people within the local community, watch or participate in a range of different activities or encourage a friend, neighbour or family member to try something new. There are also volunteering opportunities for those who want to contribute more.

Photos © Breckland District Council



CREATIVE WORKSPACE

Hat Factory Arts Centre, Luton Cultural Quarter

These workspaces for creative, design and digital businesses and artists are bringing talented creative people together so they can innovate, collaborate and generate new businesses.

Rents are competitive and start from £15 per square foot for start-up spaces. As a charity, all income generated from the workspaces is re-invested into arts and cultural programmes, skills and talent development, events, public engagement, networks and promotions.

The Hat District initiative is funded to date by South East Midlands LEP, DCMS, the Wolfson Foundation, Arts Council SE, Luton Council, Historic England, The Architectural Heritage Fund and The Steel Charitable Trust.

Photos: © Hat Factory Luton



HEALTH

Dragon Cafe, Mental Health Fight Club, London.

An open, welcoming group offering exciting, well-organised and inspirational creative events. No two Mondays are the same; each month there are different creative themes. Regular guest curators programme elements of the month's activities.

A highly effective antidote to the loneliness and isolation which is so often prevalent in those who have been affected by mental illness. It is a space to be, to take part in creative activities, eat a healthy meal and talk. The Dragon Café is run predominantly by volunteers and paid part time workers including artists. All activities are FREE to all.

Charitable Funding

Photos © Mental Fight Club

4. Cultural Foundations Inspiration

CREATIVE LEARNING

As part of the national Great Place scheme, 60 children aged 7 to 9 from two Ramsgate primary schools are taking the lead in their local community.

Young Arts and Heritage Leaders will explore Ramsgate's rich history with artists and heritage researchers, whom they recruited, and respond creatively. They will collaborate with Turner Prize winning collective, Assemble, on a Child-Led Plan for Ramsgate, and commission a major new artwork for the Harbour.

"Giving children the opportunity to take the lead and be creative is proven to enhance their wellbeing, their confidence and their listening and speaking skills." Turner Contemporary Head of Learning.

Images: Pioneering Places © Turner Contemporary



COMMUNITY COHESION

Erimus, Southpaw – an immersive theatre production with a large local community cast of over 200, was commissioned by Middlesbrough Council to celebrate the reopening of Middlesbrough Town Hall. A large-scale mass movement finale was an innovative dance theatre piece with projection mapping and text derived from conversations with Middlesbrough residents and participants in the show.

This spectacular site-specific performance brought the new building to life and the community together to celebrate local heritage.

Images: Erimus © Southpaw Dance Company
Erimus Rehearsal © Teeside Live

RE LOCATION

1927 are a creative company working to see what happens when performance, live music and animation come together.

As a new ACE National Portfolio Organisation, having been based in London, 1927 are now also based in Margate, contributing to the area's cultural renaissance, developing outreach projects as well as continuing with national touring programmes.

Their first performance in Margate was a retelling of Golam, exploring the tyranny of technology.

Images: © 1927



COMMUNITY COHESION

Pied Piper Story Telling Event, Tooting, 2015

A local creative producer led a free story telling event for local families as part of the local Arts Fringe. The Pied Piper led the local community through the streets of Tooting and Balham to the local common, exploring what happened next in the folk tale. Stilt walkers, penny farthings, Morris dancers, drummers, artist, poets and writers told stories or helped the audience to create and tell their own stories.

In the evening, folk music, story slams and special guest authors celebrated local creativity.

Image © Wandsworth Arts Fringe
Image © Rethink Interiors

“ART AND CULTURE CAN CONNECT WITH, AND CREATE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN, INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES IN UNIQUELY PERSONAL AND HIGHLY ENGAGING WAYS. IT CAN PROVIDE INSPIRATION, UNDERSTANDING, SOLACE AND ENTERTAINMENT. IT ENRICHES OUR LIVES IN DEEPLY PERSONAL WAYS. IT PROVIDES THE CONTEXT FOR THE RICHEST OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS.”

Di Lees Director-General of Imperial War Museum, Arts Council
10 year strategy 2010-2020.



5. GOVERNANCE & DELIVERY

Adoption

The Creative Chilmington Strategy and Phase One Delivery Plan was adopted by the Chilmington Management Organisation (CMO) in 2019 and endorsed by Ashford Borough Council (ABC).

The strategy will guide cultural development at Chilmington for the life of the development, with projects shown for the next ten years.

Governance & Delivery

This strategy will be governed by the CMO, with the Chilmington Delivery and Implementation Board (DIB) being critical to the implementation. In order to retain focus, oversight of the strategy and delivery plan should be evaluated at regular intervals as structures and frameworks for development oversight change over time.

During Phase One, delivery of the strategy will be managed by ABC on behalf of the new CMO, who will own the strategy and report to the DIB.

Project Management

There are various approaches that can be taken regarding project management such as identifying a Strategic Lead, Creative Programmer or Curator who may be employed within the council or later on through the Chilmington Management Organisation, or via an external consultants. Projects will be signed off by the CMO, based on recommendations from the Creative Chilmington Advisory Group.

Creative Chilmington Advisory Group

Prior to the next project commencing, ABC and the CMO will establish a Creative Chilmington Advisory Group to support the delivery of Phase One of the strategy. The group will be made up of those involved in the development of Chilmington and those who can support and uphold the ambitions and aspirations of the strategy. The make-up of the Advisory Group is expected to include members from the following:

- Chilmington Management Organisation
- Ashford Council Arts Service

- An elected ward member
- A Local Resident/s
- A Chilmington Developer
- An artist or arts organisation
- A representative of an external funder or other project partner

Additional project specific stakeholders should be included on a project by project basis.

It is advised that the Chair of the Creative Chilmington Advisory Group is a CMO Trustee who will take any recommendations requiring approvals to the CMO Board e.g. allocation of s106 spend. The Board will then need to seek approval, as is the normal procedure for s106 spend. The benefits of which partner contracts the works will be discussed at the Advisory Group for CMO approval.

A defined set of terms of reference for the Advisory Group should be agreed that help set the boundaries for decision making and only involve the Board when key decisions are required or through regular update reports.

Strategic Partnership

ABC is committed to including culture as part of the development of Chilmington. This commitment extends to working in close partnership with others to realise the objectives. Cultural ambitions require collective effort to be implemented; with developers, local community and cultural partners, and with cross-sector agencies such as planning, health, education and economic development.

Across Kent, strategic initiatives are underway to boost the role that culture plays in improving places and lives, such as the Creative Coast Cultural Destinations programme and cultural development in Ebbsfleet and within the Thames Estuary. Nationally, programmes like Creative People and Place, which includes Ideas Test in Swale and Medway, are increasing engagement in the arts. There is scope for similar initiatives to be developed to raise Ashford's strategic profile and benefit Chilmington as one of a number of strategic cultural regeneration areas across the county.

Strategy Delivery

Defining Strategy Projects

The following criteria will guide projects, seeking a cohesive approach to commissioning.

- Focus - Projects will meet one or more of the Creative Chilmington Focus Areas
- Quality - Projects will produce a quality creative experience through a quality commissioning process
- Diversity - Projects will seek to offer a diversity of approaches and outcomes and appeal to a diverse cross-section of the community
- Inspiring - Projects will offer inspiration through ideas, processes or outcomes and should inspire people to take part
- Relevance To Chilmington - Projects will evidence relevance to Chilmington's heritage, place and/or communities

Evaluation & Measuring Success of the Strategy

A series of measures will be set out to evaluate projects and quantify success (and failure), which will link to the overall strategic framework for the delivery of Chilmington. This will consider the process of commissioning, and the quality of project outcomes and engagement. Importantly this reflection will be both qualitative and quantitative and feed into the development of future projects.

Creative Leadership

When delivering programmes with a range of aims, ambitions and partners, it is most effective to identify a Lead Person, charged with responsibility for ensuring the strategy is delivered effectively, innovatively and collaboratively. This person will act as an informed advocate, seeking opportunities and ensuring strong outcomes to build capacity for Chilmington. New or existing resource will be needed for this key role.

Resources

A range of resources are needed in order to implement the strategy are identified below:



Resources required for implementing the strategy

Community Engagement

Consultation

The following groups and individual representatives from such groups have played a role in shaping the development of this strategy;

- Planning Policy Team, Ashford Borough Council
- Cultural Services, Ashford Borough Council
- Chilmington Delivery & Implementation Board
- Ashford Strategic Delivery Board
- Chilmington Management Organisation
- Chilmington Thematic Group 2
- Chilmington Community Stakeholder Group
- Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council
- Jasmin Vardimon Company
- Arts Council England
- Kent County Council Art Team
- Ebbsfleet Development Corporation
- Chilmington Green Primary School

In addition, local residents and interested individuals were engaged through artist Janetka's Platun's project 'IRON GALL, Chilmington Votes' during summer and autumn 2019. Feedback from this process, which included workshops with the first students and their families at Chilmington Green Primary School, and long term local residents has helped to shape the strategy.

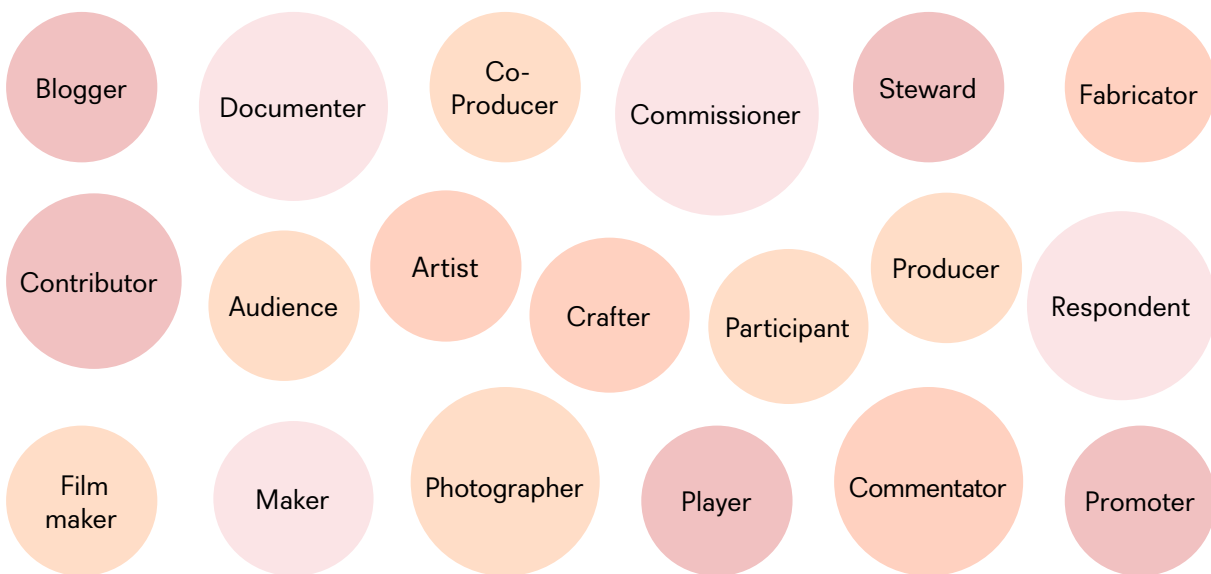
Community

By community we mean people who live or work in Chilmington or nearby, across the generations with a particular focus on young people and families.

Taking Part

Arts and culture offer a different kind of opportunity to interact with the development of Chilmington and to co-create artworks and projects, helping to create the place, and to integrate communities. Engagement will play out will vary from project to project, but we can describe a sliding scale of levels of participation and types of outcome.

A general principle is that wherever possible, there will be opportunities for local people to choose how to get involved in different ways, through a variety of levels of involvement and in varying scales of project and outcome:

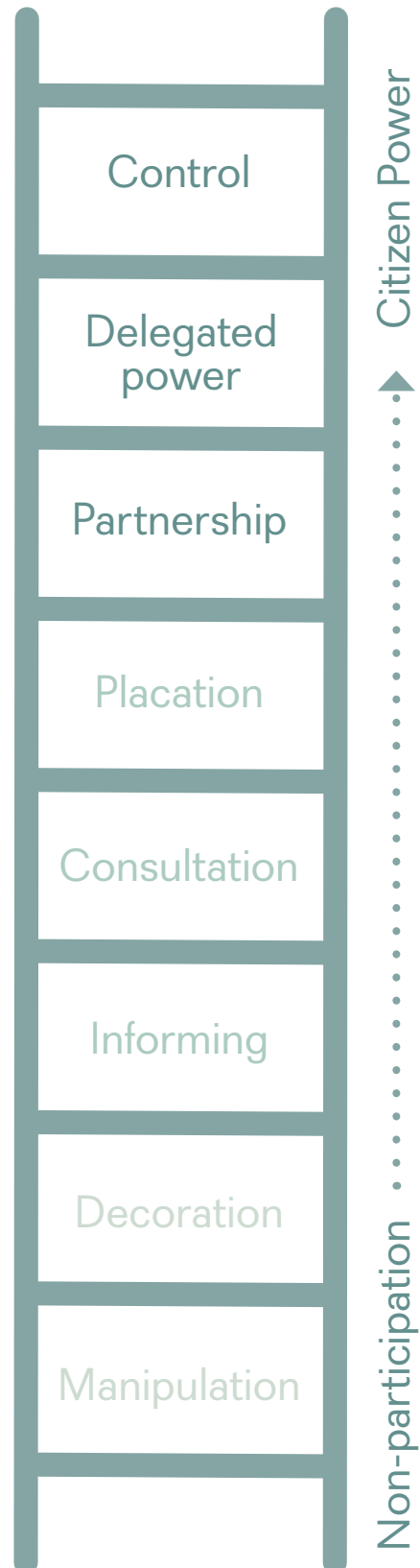


Roles that the community could have in projects

Degrees of participation

When initiating a project, the role that the community will play should be considered from the outset. In reference to Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen's Participation, we will aim to commission projects in which participation and engagement is meaningful and offer a variety of ways for people to be involved such as:

- Taking part in creative community activity such as a choir, dance or art class or music group.
- Setting up or running a creative activity or group.
- Hearing about an artist project and so being aware that a Creative Chilmington project is happening.
- Engaging with an artist to convey knowledge/history/relationship about the local area and in so doing makes a valuable contribution.
- Through a creative project, having a different type of engagement with the development area, meeting other people locally, building awareness of the local community and the creativity on offer
- Transferring local knowledge between existing and new residents, helping community to integrate and build positive community feeling
- Collaborating with an artist to co-produce a creative project
- Being inspired to be involved in the delivery of other creative projects or to help steer the Creative Chilmington Strategy
- Learning a new skill through taking part in a creative workshop
- Attending a talk to find out about an artist's work



Adapted from Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen's Participation

“OUR AMBITION IS TO CREATE A PLACE WHERE.... ENCHANTING, SURPRISING AND INNOVATIVE THINGS HAPPEN” AND “WHERE CULTURE BECOMES A PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE WITH MORE PEOPLE ENGAGING WITH, EXPERIENCING AND BEING INSPIRED BY, EXCELLENT ARTS.”



6. PHASE ONE PROJECTS

A VARIETY OF PROJECTS

We will invite artists and other creative practitioners into Chilmington to develop a series of diverse projects to enhance the long term housing expansion and respond to the transformation of Chilmington.

Working with the local community, this will begin to infuse the area with creative thinking, artistic activity and permanent and temporary features and activity within the landscape.

In the initial projects, our focus will be on community interaction rather than necessarily permanent public art. Artist briefs will allow for a range of responses and approaches to encourage experimentation and playfulness, whilst being mindful of the need for accessibility and ensuring projects relate and are accessible to a broad audience.

Larger arts commissions will also integrate community engagement. Detail will come through the commissioning process as artists are appointed and the local community can get involved.

Projects may start from an open brief or a more specific objective. Artists may be provided with a space in which to be based or operate as a roving practitioner. Projects may be short term or take place over a longer period and may lead to outcomes which are temporary, ephemeral, permanent, infrastructure or activity based.

2019-2023 : "Welcome to Here"

- These artist projects delve into and respond to local heritage and community interests whilst the first residents move into Chilmington.

2023-2028 : "Chilmington Curiosities"

- A series of small to mid-scale playful creative projects commissioned through artists, to aid way-finding, add character and animate Chilmington's public realm.

2028-2030 : "Chilmington Rising"

- A significant contemporary arts intervention in the landscape for all ages to enjoy at a time when a substantial number of residents have moved in.

2020-2030 : "Cultural Foundations"

- A work stream that will build capacity for culture and creativity in Chilmington.

Phase One projects will be managed by Ashford Borough Council on behalf of the Chilmington Management Organisation (CMO). During this time, the CMO will be able to learn about the creative commissioning process with a view to taking on this role in future if desirable, if the capacity is available and the skills are developed or sought.

WELCOME TO HERE 2019-2023

PROJECTS 01-03

All our projects will seek to engage our local communities in different ways. Under the banner 'Welcome to Here', projects 01-03 will be fully focused on bringing artists and other creative professionals together with people living locally, to explore the local area in and around Chilmington.

These projects will be place-based; delving into and responding to local heritage & community interests, and encouraging everyday creativity and reflection, as part of community building.



Project 01

IRON GALL, Chilmington Votives

- Janetka Platun

June to November 2019

Artist Janetka Platun was appointed for this first commission to act as artist-in-residence and engage with existing residents to reflect on the area's heritage and the upcoming place change.

Janetka was invited to produce a creative response and a tangible artwork (ephemeral, temporary or physical) to be shared with current and new residents. This would mark the current point in time, as the first new homes are about to be completed.

Janetka uncovered local stories and begun to understand the kinds of creative projects the existing community and first new residents would like to see. She visited local groups and talked with a range of people from the local area. She ran a creative workshop with Chilmington Primary students, families and staff; a community summer walking and drawing event drawing in the local landscape and a closing community celebration.

.....
Chilmington Green and its immediate surroundings have a long history of human settlement. It was considered a sacred place where people celebrated life and death, a place where offerings for the future were deposited.

My residency draws on this rich history while reflecting on the current housing development over the next twenty years. In response a series of contemporary votives will be created. The first, a limited edition of 500 vials containing oak gall ink made from oak galls collected in the woodlands neighbouring the new development site and made with the help of the Repair Café and local residents. The second set of votives will be bronze and iron casts of a selection of the oak galls. These will provide a rich metaphor for home and belonging that has arisen from conversations with local residents.

A booklet that shares people's thoughts as the area undergoes change will accompany the votives.

Janetka Platun, 2019
.....



Path to Colemans' Kitchen Wood © Janetka Platun 2019

Project 01

IRON GALL, Chilmington Votives

- Janetka Platun



All images © Janetka Platun 2019



All images © Janetka Platun 2019

Project 01b

IRON GALL Follow-On Project

Stakeholders and local participants have much appreciated the approach that Janetka Platun took to the initial Welcome to Here commission. She has begun to get under the skin of the place and there is a desire to continue working with her to build on the creative and community work that has taken place over the summer of 2019.

Janetka will be invited to develop a further proposal for consideration by early 2020.

Timeframe:
2020

Budget: £15k - 30K
Expected to be funded via Community Development S106 and supported by making a Grants for the Arts application to Arts Council England.

Project 01

Evaluation

Janetka's project was well received by both participants and the commissioners. It is indicative of her sensitive approach that the CMO wish to explore a further opportunity for Janetka to work with them and local residents in 2020. A detailed evaluation will be undertaken once the project finishes with a celebratory event.

"Janetka was amazing. She made everyone feel welcome, individual and involved. My children loved that everyone created something unique using the same materials and I know that if they could have they would have continued for hours."

Local resident and workshop participant

"The way Janetka setup the scene made it inviting and relaxing.... It was really a chance for people to pause and reflect and to challenge themselves a little to be free with the brush or pen, to not be precious about what they were drawing, but to express themselves."

Dan Daley, Masterplan Coordinator
Ashford Borough Council

"When places are undergoing changes that will radically transform communities and landscape, there are inherent sensitivities. Janetka embarked on a journey of discovery, always curious; she met people naturally through her walks and visits to places like the Singleton Environment Centre and Repair Café and held conversations with residents and local heritage experts."

As commissioners, with our partners at Ashford Council and the Chilmington Management Organisation, we were able to give Janetka the trust and space to undertake her work without overly defining the outcome. Her observations, thoughtful approach, ability to listen, to notice the quiet and unseen, were rewarded by a series of serendipitous events."

Susie Gray - Project Commissioner
Dallas-Pierce-Quintero

Project 02

Chilmington Art School

The next two 'Welcome to Here' projects, will build on the outcomes and evaluation of the first projects. Full details will emerge when artists are appointed and they develop their ideas with the local community.

This project will focus on the new Chilmington Green Primary School community; the children, their teachers and their families and carers. They are young pioneers as the first students in Chilmington's first new school. This project will enable them to undertake a creative journey to enrich their education and enhance their communal sense of belonging, whilst supporting the school's creative curriculum offer.

It is anticipated the new school building will be complete in 2021/2. This project may result in the co-production of an artwork to be installed at the new site or a creative event to celebrate the new school opening.

Timeframe

Preparation: 2021

Duration April 2021 - December 2021

Budget: £15k minimum

Funded via S106 for Public Arts boosted by external funding where possible.



Image: You are an artist © Bob and Roberta Smith

Project 03

The Chilmington Roundhouse

This project will look to the wider community and in particular younger and older residents, to think about intergenerational relations and experience of place. It is proposed that this project create a mobile 'social structure' as a gathering space and a hub for a programme of community activity.

The structure will be able to be stored and re-used in future, with scope for it to move around as required. The initial community hub will be located in an area of new development where it is felt it will be beneficial to create an additional community focal point.

Timeframe

Preparation: 2021

Duration: January - December 2022 with ability for reuse in future years

Funded via S106 for Public Arts, possible additional S106 strands such as Community Development, boosted by external funding where possible.



Image: Pump House Pavilion © Wandsworth Council

CHILMINGTON CURIOSITIES 2023-2028

Projects 04 -06

These projects will take place from 2023 to 2026. Artists or other creative practitioners will be commissioned to devise small to mid-scale playful artworks or creative features to animate and add interest to the urban or green public realm. These features will aid way-finding and be integrated to add character.

Locations for these works will be identified in response to strategy, need and to community preference, and will be dependent on what public realm has been delivered at the time.

Detailed artist briefs will set out where within the scheme the opportunities for these interventions lie and smaller works will be clustered to maximise impact.

Funding

These projects will be funded by S106 for Public Arts to add to and enhance what can be achieved through S106 funds for Landscape, Street Furniture or Play.



Project 04

Fragments and Curios

Working with archaeologists, historians and with creative writers or artists, a multi-generational group of residents will co-create a range of permanent embellishments that add interest and character to the public realm.

These may be integrated within the built or landscape environment or be located within already completed areas.

A detailed brief will support a process to identify an artist/s to facilitate and contribute to this process.

Programme: 2023-24

Funding: Public Art S106 contribution £40k and S106 contributions from other sources such as public realm, wayfinding, street furniture. Potential for an Arts Council grant bid to support the co-production process and the artist.



Image: Public Artwork © Rodney Harris

Project 05

Our Space

Young people, potentially from the new secondary school, will be mentored to write a brief and commission an artist to collaborate with to create a teen shelter and/or seating within one of the new landscape areas.

This process will build learning about the commissioning and creative process and encourage local young people to take ownership of a space for them and their peers in the local area, whilst making a structure which be appealing will add creative interest in the landscape.

Programme: 2025-26

S106 contribution: £50k



Image: Modified Social bench © Jeppe Hein

Project 06

Artist Secondment

An artist will join the Chilmington Design Team to enhance the proposals for an area of public realm within the second phase of the development. This will be through artistic interventions that can be integrated within the overall design concept and be delivered at the same time as the new space.

Programme: 2026-27*

S106 contribution: £60k

* This project could be brought forward to 2025 if it was decided that this would dovetail with the developer's design programme better. We will review the date for this commissions as the development programme for phase two emerges.



Image: Barking Town Square © muf architecture/art

CHILMINGTON RISING 2028-2030

Project 07 will commission and deliver a significant arts intervention in the landscape for all ages to enjoy, at a time when a larger number of new homes have been built and more residents have moved in.

An artist or creative design practitioner/s will be appointed to work with the community to devise a large scale bespoke sculptural structure in the landscape which will act as a beacon for the area.

Responses must be sympathetic to and reflect local heritage and landscape. The location will be agreed through consultation. It must encourage playful interaction and pleasure and become a much loved place for the local community, which will also invite visitors from further afield in Ashford and beyond.

It is anticipated this project will be accompanied by a community engagement programme which will invite involvement in the development of, and engagement with, the resulting artwork.

The project will be prepared in 2027 and be undertaken from 2028 until 2030.

Funding

This project will be funded by S106 for Public Arts and other S106 streams. It may also be enlarged by external funding such as for arts or heritage.





CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS 2020-2030

Cultural Foundations describes an ongoing creative community development approach.

At the same time that a range of arts commission are being delivered, this work stream will build capacity for culture and creativity in Chilmington by seeking to create the conditions in which a creative community life can flourish. This will be done by seeking opportunities through the overarching development programme for how and where creativity can enrich outcomes or improve lives.

On the following pages we have outlined specific opportunities where we envisage creativity and culture can be brought to the fore, and new facilities or infrastructure secured.

This work, which will also be part of the Chilmington Development Programme, will look in parallel to embed arts, culture and creative approaches through community development work.



Community Facilities

As planned community facilities in Chilmington are designed and built, we want to ensure the spaces will be fit for purpose for cultural uses for all ages, for professional and community use. This may include:

- Community arts groups
- Creative classes
- Dance or fitness
- Choirs & Music
- Film screenings
- Rehearsals
- Public Performances
- Exhibitions
- Craft Sales
- Artist and maker studios
- Small creative enterprise workspace

This means thinking about uses and design as well as the needs of each, with flexibility being key and thinking about:

- Equipment
- Technical Specification e.g. dance floor
- Day light, lighting and ability to block light
- Disability Access
- Storage
- Vehicle access for loading and unloading
- Public Transport and Parking
- Affordable Hire Fees

A large development like Chilmington could be said to require an arts-specific facility and this should be explored. However, it's also important to ensure that a range of facilities are flexible and take into account the needs of a variety of uses and users.

Creative Workspace

We propose that part of the smaller scale workspace in the District Centre to be allocated as affordable studio space for artists, makers and small creative enterprises, to build a creative workspace cluster, potentially as a satellite to the new spaces for creative enterprise in Ashford.

This will diversify employment and uses in the district centre and help to build a creative community in Chilmington, with the knock on effects of diversifying the types of creative activity on offer locally.

Co-Located Provision

Kent County Council are in receipt of DCMS Cultural Development funding to explore tangible examples of co-locating arts provision together with other community facilities. There is scope to learn from this at Chilmington through a skill sharing partnership which should be instigated.

When planning new schools, library and health facilities, these can benefit from the co-location of arts organisations to build appetite and take up of creative participation.

It's well-established that children benefit from access to the arts for personal, and education benefits as well as to build strong resilience and creative thinking skills. With the arts increasingly squeezed out of the core school curriculum offer and the impact of reduced funding, schools are struggling to ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced education offer which includes creativity. This is especially important for children who may not otherwise access the arts.

Arts organisations can contribute to and enrich a school's creative curriculum whilst benefiting themselves from affordable rent, either in the long term or during the initial years before a new school has a full intake of students.

Arts in libraries have a long history and remain a popular and effective library engagement and learning activity, whether as part of driving skills and literacy or to encourage and diversify library use alongside e.g. yoga, book clubs and talks. There is great potential to co-locate arts organisations or artists studios in libraries, which can be explored in Chilmington.

Through Health

With the many challenges facing the NHS and social care providers, Social Prescribing is on the increase. There is added incentive to look at how arts providers can more effectively work with the NHS and local CCGs to encourage participation in the arts as part of prevention initiatives, or to provide programmes that offer support to people with mental or physical health conditions and/or reduce loneliness and isolation. Partnerships with artists and arts providers ensure that the arts are available where needed.

Community Programmes

The arts can play a lead role in community festivals and events that provide the chance for people to come together and take part in positive celebrations or to enjoy social gatherings, music and food.

Ashford's Create Festival programme can expand to offer satellite activity in Chilmington and develop activity with Chilmington residents that can become part of the Ashford Town Centre events. This will help Chilmington residents to feel part of the wider area.

Developing bespoke community events for Chilmington which can take place and grow year on year, will build a real sense of community. Artists and arts organisations can help to 'curate' and galvanise these, bringing a creative perspective and creating something truly unique. This can be a great chance for people to share home-grown talent by performing together and to each other.

Younger and Older Creatives

Ashford's population is increasing with a particular emphasis on older and younger people, so it's important that this strategy and community development work considers what their needs will be.

Outside of school, artists and the arts can offer a wealth of different activities for young people to take part in, to develop friendships, express themselves and build confidence and with a wide variety of activities from spoken word, to music, dance, fashion or design that appeal to younger age groups. Often, these activities can culminate in performances which can be shared with family and friends or presented as part of wider community festivals.

At the same time, meaningful social activities are needed for all stages of older age. Activities such as group walks, dance, poetry and choirs all provide older people with social interaction and opportunities to get bodies and minds moving in creative ways.

Intergenerational opportunities can build friendships, share experiences and exchanges across the generations which can be rewarding and uplifting for all.

A PROCESS FOR COMMISSIONING PROJECTS

A successful commission needs to be led by an agreed process and expertise, and supported by people with vision who have a stake in the local area development such as members of the community, local council and an artist or arts organisation.

Project Brief

The artist's brief is essential. It features at the start of the commissioning process to guide the artist appointment and their response, and should be appended to an artist's contract.

A good brief should be clear, but not overly prescriptive, and include all aspects of the commission including aims & objectives, artist's role, contextual information (e.g. about the site, budget, programme, longevity & maintenance requirements). In addition, it should provide clear information as to the commissioning process, contract requirements, statutory authority obligations and insurance cover.

Artist Commissioning

There are varied approaches to commissioning public arts. If the local authority has a public art strategy, this may establish a process. Artists can be commissioned by direct appointment, by invitation or sourced through an open call. Open call commissions will be advertised on relevant websites, through the arts media and via local arts networks to allow an open selection process.

Project Community Engagement

The support of local people is essential to develop local pride and ownership in arts projects and processes. All new arts commissions for the public realm should seek to involve the public in their creation in some way. At the very least this should involve community consultation, but at Chilmington we propose to involve local people more actively, either in the commissioning process, or through the development of the work. The aspiration and responsibility for this aspect of the project should be clarified at the outset and included in the artist brief.

Community engagement can:

- result in a wider sense of ownership, understanding and enjoyment of the project
- create a sense of pride and raise awareness/appreciation of the locality
- provide opportunities to develop and utilise local skills
- provide a means by which the community can have input to shaping the local environment
- provide an opportunity for new and existing members of the community to collaborate, socialise and be creative
- enable learning about the process of arts projects

The project commissioner should undertake an initial period of engagement with the community to feed into the brief which may be through identifying a member of the community willing to sit on the commissioning group, prior to the artist's selection.

Ensuring Quality Projects

This refers to the quality of thought and approach, brought to bear on the development of a project. Quality projects arise from the combination of a suitably skilled and inspirational artist/s and an experienced, engaged, sensitive and demanding

commissioner/steering group. Well-written and inspiring project briefs and thorough pre-planning are vital in laying the foundations for a quality outcome, whatever kind of outcome that may be.

Critical appraisal of the artist's ideas and project design development is crucial in fostering quality projects, as is allowing artists the right amount of support, guidance and freedom while developing and delivering their work.

Project Evaluation

It's important to build in a process of documentation and evaluation from the outset, including setting specific milestones. This ensures that a detailed record of the project is available for future reference and helps to promote the project further afield. By carrying out a full evaluation, and comparing the actual chain of events and outcomes, with what was planned and envisaged, the commissioner can demonstrate to all parties involved, including funding partners, the activities, successes and lessons from the process, and plan confidently for future projects.

Creative Chilmington projects will follow Ashford Borough Council's lead with regard to project evaluation and measures of success, around quality, engagement, participation, impacts and linking to social value and/or vibrant economy criteria, looking at qualitative and not just quantitative aspects.

Celebration

It's important to plan some form of event or inauguration to mark project milestones or a project's completion. This recognises all the hard work which has gone into the project by the artist/s and others involved, and celebrates what has been achieved and the impact on the local place. It also provides an opportunity to publicise the project and gain, through media

publicity, some recognition and feedback. This is an opportunity to thank the artist/s and the community that have contributed and hear feedback which may support the development of the next commissions.

Project Communications

Establishing and implementing a concise communications plan means that your local community can hear about the project, know when activities are taking place, how to get involved and how the project will benefit the local area. This might be through existing or new social media accounts, local press, posters and word of mouth. For larger projects, there may be regional or national media interest as well as local. This all helps to build positive perception of the place.

Project-specific Fundraising

If successful, fundraising for arts projects, as part of wider community development targets, can raise ambition around what can be achieved and take advantage of existing development funding, using it to lever additional resources.

This might be through funds for community development, heritage, health or arts and culture. Many ambitious projects which bring culture and communities together through strategic funding, are underway in Kent and across the UK. As a designated Garden Village, Chilmington may be able to access funding to increase the scale and scope of work as part of this strategy and to increase the level of community participation in these.

Projects with schools or young people may connect with Artwork, the SE area Bridge Organisation promoting culture for children and young people.

NEXT STEPS

An action plan will be produced to accompany this strategy and ensure implementation, however the immediate next steps include:

1. By the end of 2019, identify a Lead Person with responsibility for progressing, implementing and reporting on the Creative Chilmington Strategy and develop an action plan. It is anticipated that this will be the Arts & Cultural Industries Manager, Ashford Borough Council. Ensure this work is continually integrated into other work-streams (ie to aid implementation, identify opportunities and pool resources).
2. The Lead Person will produce a detailed brief for Project 01b, obtain funding and develop an evaluation plan. This will include convening a meeting of the Advisory Group and CMO to agree the brief and their role in the artist selection process.
3. Commission an artist to lead Project 01b in early 2020 to ensure continuity of activities and community relationships.
4. At the outset of Project 01B, devise a concise Communications Plan for phase one delivery and ensure Creative Chilmington and its projects are communicated effectively to the local community and beyond.
5. In early 2020, devise a plan for how to develop the Cultural Foundations work strand, to seek opportunities for new cultural infrastructure and to influence wider development plans, in order to expand creative opportunities for the local community through the planning and design process. Identify immediate opportunities for this work.
6. During 2020, seek to develop wider strategic relationships to benefit the programme and identify additional funding and partnership opportunities including Kent County Council, the Arts Council England and through the Garden Communities programme.

Commissioned by Ashford Borough Council on behalf of the Chilmington Management Organisation

Produced by:
Dallas-Pierce-Quintero

Designed by:
Dallas-Pierce-Quintero

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About Dallas-Pierce-Quintero

Dallas-Pierce-Quintero is passionate about using art and design to enrich people's lives. The studio enlivens public spaces, crafts beautiful architecture, creates meaningful public art and envisages cultural strategies for places experiencing change.

Experience in delivering art and architecture projects gives the studio a unique advantage in working with local government, developers and cultural organisations to develop cultural strategies for places undergoing transformation.

Dallas-Pierce-Quintero has successfully delivered cultural strategies for developments across the UK, each with their own unique challenges and aspirations.

The studio's work is highly site-specific; exploring places, spaces and engaging the people that inhabit them through on-going dialogue to highlight existing cultural assets and define a foundation from which to build a vision for the future.

Contact Details

Studio NS23
Netil House
1 Westgate Street
London E8 5RL

www.d-p-q.uk

+44 (0)208 088 1880

WATER

ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



CHILMINGTON MANAGEMENT
ORGANISATION

Dallas-Pierce-Quintero