

MORE THAN A PLACE.

RESEARCH + REPORT
COMMISSIONED BY:
ASELA

JANUARY -
SEPTEMBER 21

**THE VITAL ROLE OF CULTURE AND THE CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES AND WHAT THEY NEED TO THRIVE.**





HELLO
By Katrina Palmer:

East Beach, Shoeburyness for England's
Creative Coast.
Photo: Mark Massey

Cover image:

In The End Is The Beginning.
By Nadav Kander.

Installed by the Thames Estuary at
Shoeburyness as part of Estuary 2021.

Photo: Mark Massey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MORE THAN A PLACE.

Culture and the creative industries permeate all our lives - across ages, experience and place. It is culture and creativity that identifies a place as specific, instantly recognizable, confident, inventive and bold. It is the culture and creativity of a place that drives reputation and pride, promoting well-being, connectivity and optimism.

The creative industries are unique as a sector. Unlike other industrial sectors, creatives tend to cluster in micro and freelance networks, they often live within the community where they also work. They contribute to a vibrant economy, and to a wide range of other vital agendas, including education, health, wellbeing, community cohesion and a wider sense of curiosity, identity and belonging.

They play a vital role.

They are the expression of a place and the people who live and work there.

South Essex has a once in a generation opportunity. The creation of ASELA has allowed for a shared approach to visionary planning across the region. Five key workstreams include the ambition to create South Essex Estuary Park (SEE Park) - a new, connected parkland that will transform the coastline and post-industrial marsh and woodlands of the north banks of the Thames. This expansive vision for the creation of a new leisure, culture and tourism destination sits perfectly with the dispersed networks and clustering that is a key feature of the largely freelance and micro-industries of the creative industries in South Essex.

It also provides a unique opportunity, in partnership with the South Essex Plan, to build a vision to deliver the much-needed, fit-for-purpose work spaces for creative production, performance, presentation and retail, responding to the current high demand and transforming the experience and future potential of the creative sector in South Essex.

Based on direct research from the sector across South Essex, this document sets out the drivers and evidence to support Three Key Actions and Five Recommendations that will create an environment that supports and enables the sector to thrive, grow and be a key part of the South Essex Plan and vision for SEE Park, as follows:-

THREE KEY ACTIONS

1. A Senior Cultural Strategist Role
2. Strengthen and invest in Networks
3. Pioneer new methods of creative skills delivery

FIVE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create flexible, affordable space fit for the creative industries - responding to High Demand
2. Build provision and resource for the Creative Industries through CIL and s106 / or response to planning reforms
3. Create knowledge exchange to strengthen support systems
4. Change the story - investment not subsidy
5. Build an ambitious Creative Industries Strategy for SEE Park

Our report highlights the huge energy, talent and potential of the creative sector in the region and provides a clear roadmap of how and where to place resources and investment to build on this.

A thriving and diverse creative sector plays a vital role in creating great places to live, work and visit, bringing prosperity and attracting visitors, inward investment and new business.

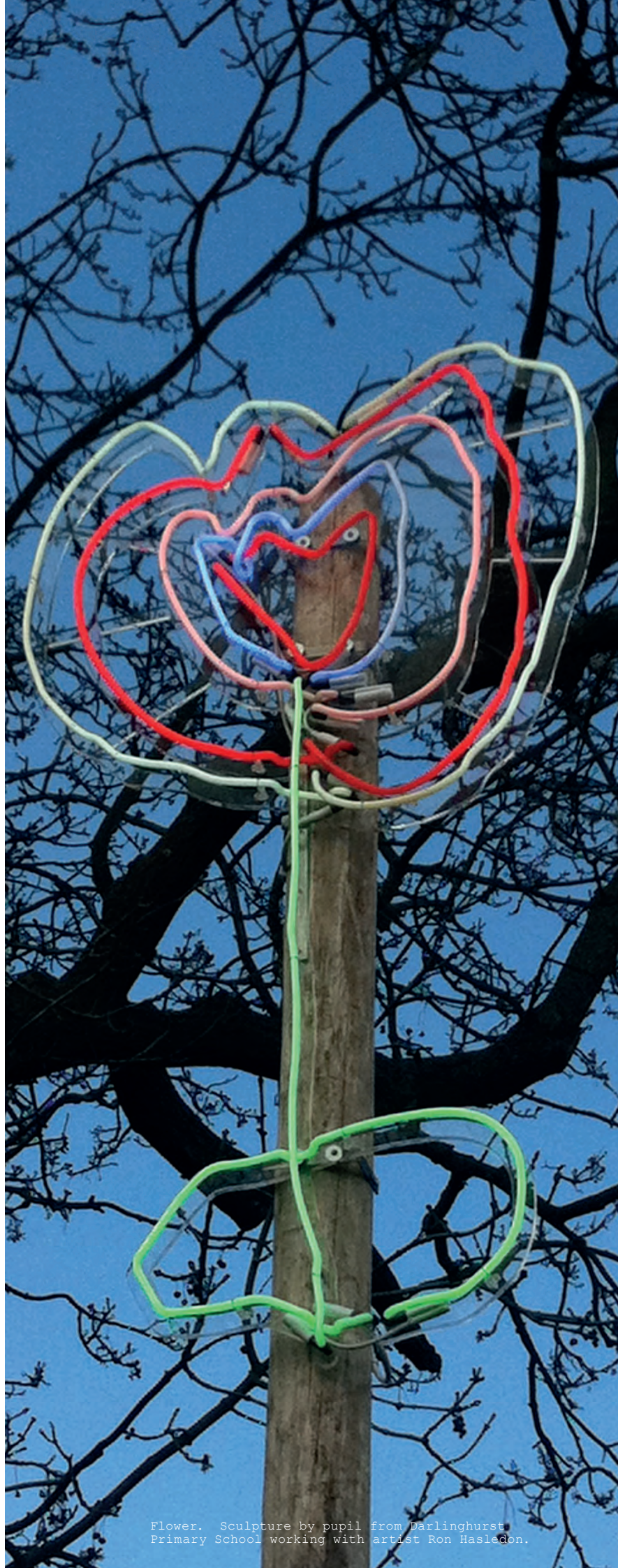
Vital to a thriving and diverse sector is understanding the environment that enables growth and development.

This report describes the ingredients of how to build the creative industries of South Essex contributing to making our Place more than just any Place. provides a clear roadmap of how and where to place resources and investment to build on this.

A thriving and diverse creative sector plays a vital role in creating great places to live, work and visit, bringing prosperity and attracting visitors, inward investment and new business.

Vital to a thriving and diverse sector is understanding the environment that enables growth and development.

This report describes the ingredients of how to build the creative industries of South Essex contributing to making our Place more than just any Place.



Flower. Sculpture by pupil from Darlington Primary School working with artist Ron Hasledon.



Tilbury Walkway of Dreams by Ewewright.
Ferry bridge at Tilbury Cruise Terminal.
Photo courtesy of Port of Tilbury.

INTRODUCTION

A PLACE THAT IS CONFIDENT INVENTIVE & BOLD.

The research and consultation that has shaped this document was commissioned by ASELA (the Association of South Essex Local Authorities – Southend, Rochford, Brentwood, Thurrock, Basildon, Castle Point and Essex County Council) to inform the Growing the Creative Industries in South Essex Programme, one of 10 key development strands identified by ASELA as pivotal to the future health and wealth of the region.

Working together these seven local authorities have committed to creating a strategic plan with practical interventions, to support and grow the Creative Industries across South Essex.

Since the work began, FIVE initial Anchor Programmes to take forward ASELA's visionary Placemaking work for the South Essex region have now been selected.

- Infrastructure & Housing
- Technical University
- Thames Freeport
- Superfast Digital
- South Essex Estuary Park

This document, together with a set of slides, describes how the creative industries can play a vital role across these five programmes – creating opportunity, connection and intersection across each – and providing the ingredients that make a Place more than just any Place – a place which is specific, instantly recognizable, confident, inventive and bold.

This report suggests 3 key actions; 5 key recommendations and identifies 7 initial project opportunities that respond to energy, the articulated need and the data from our research.

These recommendations are directly aligned to the work of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor (TEPC), the Thames Estuary Growth Board (TEGB) and Creative Estuary (CE). They will enable strong collaboration and joint master planning across ASELA and will be an essential anchor component of the South Essex economic growth plan.

The ambition is to position South Essex as a leading destination for the creative sector within Creative Estuary and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor.

ASELA commissioned a Working Group, made up of South Essex based artists and creative businesses, to find out from peers and colleagues these four things:

1. What the creative sector needs: to create the optimum environment across South Essex to thrive and grow.
2. Where current opportunities exist – centres of expertise, energy, ideas, market opportunities, supply chains, venues and spaces, potential growth.
3. What is needed to fast-track these opportunities set out some key recommendations for actions, focus and investment.
4. Consider the skills needs and training opportunities for the future creative workforce and set out new models and ideas for how our sector could help deliver.

THE WORKING GROUP

Led by arts organisation, Metal, the Working Group was made up of 11 artists and creatives from across the geography of South Essex, working in a range of disciplines including architecture, graphic design, illustration, film and media, and visual arts. This group included BAS Arts Index, The Old Water Works and TOMA (The Other MA). This piece of research has, therefore, come directly from the cultural sector itself.

Creative Estuary has been an active part of the research through their Creative Assets Development programme - working towards a long-term, collective and strategic model to provide space for cultural production.

We are grateful to the 416 creative individuals, organisations and businesses who have given their time to attend workshops, provide detailed feedback and complete our survey - all of which has been invaluable insight that has informed this document.

A full list of the Working Group is included in our index.

Our report benefits from the information and detail contained in the many previous studies of the region, the headlines from which we have included below as a reminder of why the Creative Industries sector is such a vital tool in the social and economic growth, and well-being, of any healthy town, city or borough.

It is written to work closely with current regional planning and strategies across the region, including:

- Creative Estuary (Essex and Kent);
- Thames Estuary Production Corridor (Essex, Kent and East London);
- Thames Estuary Growth Board;
- The wider SELEP geography (Essex, Kent and East Sussex)
- SECEN (South East Creative Economic Network).



METHOD OF DELIVERY

- An online survey
- Six consultation events with presentations from 31 businesses and 219 in attendance
- Desk research
- Follow up detailed conversations and case studies
- Research and conversation with local authority officers, potential investment partners
- Weekly Working Group sessions to analyse and discuss findings – across discipline and geography
- Written report and presentation



Wood print block, work in progress. By Louise Altman.
Photo courtesy of the artist.

115.9BN

(5.9%) TO UK GVA

1 IN 8

**ALMOST 1 IN 8 UK BUSINESSES ARE
CREATIVE BUSINESSES**

2X

**GROWING AT TWICE THE RATE OF THE
ECONOMY AS A WHOLE**

**“MORE THAN JUST AN INDUSTRIAL SECTOR —
THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ARE ‘OF’ THIS PLACE
AS WELL AS HERE ‘IN’ THIS PLACE.**

**THEY BRING PROSPERITY BY ATTRACTING
OTHERS — VISITORS, INWARD INVESTMENT,
NEW BUSINESS.”**

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

WHY CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

The creative and cultural sector is a broad and eclectic mix. It covers a number of areas that are key to the economic health of the UK and our 'brand' as a modern, connected, innovative and inventive place.

Prior to the global pandemic, the creative industries contributed £115.9bn (5.9%) to UK GVA and had been growing year on year at more than twice the rate of the economy as a whole (Over the last 10 years, by 43.6%) with growth in jobs in the sector growing at three times the UK average. Almost 1 in 8 UK businesses are creative businesses, collectively exporting £46bn in goods and services worldwide (12% of UK services exports).¹

The creative and cultural sector also delivers on a wide range of other vital agendas across civil society, including health, wellbeing, community cohesion and a wider sense of belonging.

Culture and creativity permeates across all sectors, industries and walks of life. Access to ideas, innovation, great design, music and our own expression is vital to success whatever your role or ambition.

It is unique as a sector in that it's output impacts and touches everyone, often in ways that can seem intangible.

The sector is multi-faceted and as a result, often hard to quantify and 'value' which can lead to it being misunderstood.



Village Green festival, 2019. Chalkwell Park Southend-On-Sea. Photo: Courtesy of Metal.



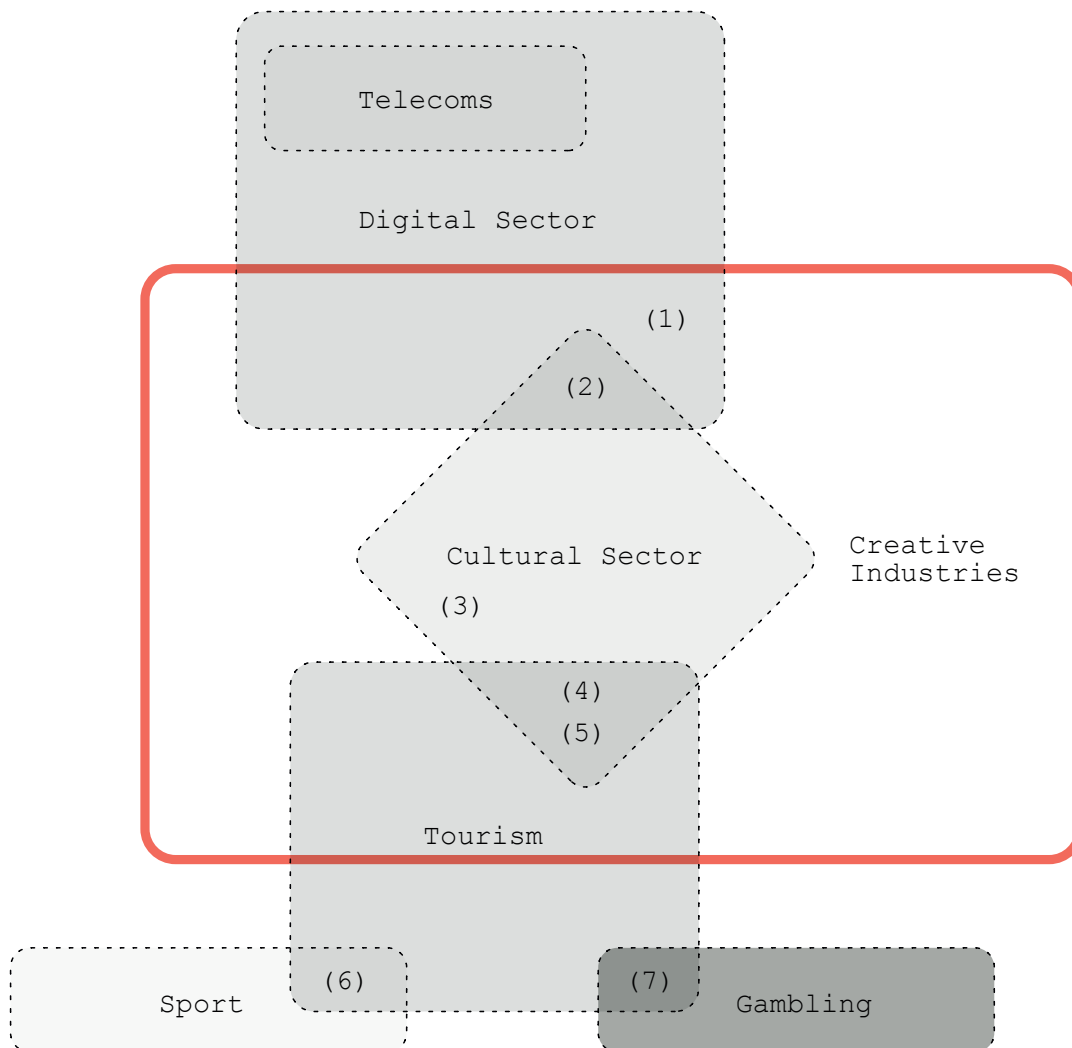
UNDERSTANDING THE SECTOR

A woman with curly hair, wearing blue overalls and a red patch that says "REBEL FOR LIFE" with a black 'X' symbol, stands in a grassy field. She is leaning against a large, vertical artwork on a wooden cart. The artwork is a textured, green and yellow abstract piece. In the background, there are power lines and a distant city skyline under a cloudy sky.

TANDING OR

DEFINITIONS

Source: DCMS, 2021



1. Publishing, computer games, software, publishing, computer programming, computer consultancy activities
2. Film, TV, Music, Radio
3. Heritage, retail of music and video recordings, manufacture of musical instruments, reproduction of recorded media

4. Arts, Museum activities
5. Heritage
6. Renting of sports goods, operation of sports facilities, other sport activities
7. Gambling

Civil Society has not been depicted in this figure because it spans across all industries, both within DCMS sectors and outside.

Note: Our survey and wider consultation included the overlaps from no.1 to no.5. (Shown within the red square)

2M

**THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES EMPLOY
OVER 2 MILLION PEOPLE.**

1M

**NEW CREATIVE SECTOR JOBS
PROJECTED BY 2030**

3RD

**A THIRD OF THE SECTOR'S WORKFORCE
ARE SELF-EMPLOYED.**

95%

**OF CREATIVE BUSINESSES EMPLOYS
FEWER THAN 10 PEOPLE.**

**“CLUSTERS & NETWORKS ARE VITAL
TO THE SECTOR'S INNOVATION &
ECONOMIC SUCCESS.”**

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



96%

OF CREATIVE BUSINESSES ARE MICROBUSINESSES

47%

ALMOST HALF (47%) OF ALL CREATIVE WORKERS ARE FREELANCE.



SELEP REGION COVERS ESSEX, KENT AND EAST SUSSEX

MANY FREELANCERS WANT TO WORK IN A SHARED SPACE TO COMBAT ISOLATION AND FACILITATE THE NETWORKING NECESSARY TO GENERATE CONTRACTS AND KEEP KNOWLEDGE UP TO DATE.

“CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS ARE MORE LIKELY TO CREATE A JOB THAN TAKE A JOB.”

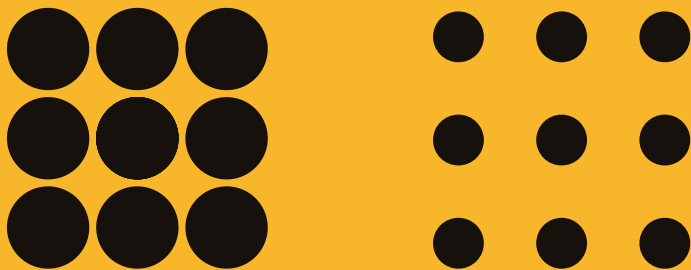
SECEN PROSPECTUS

46K

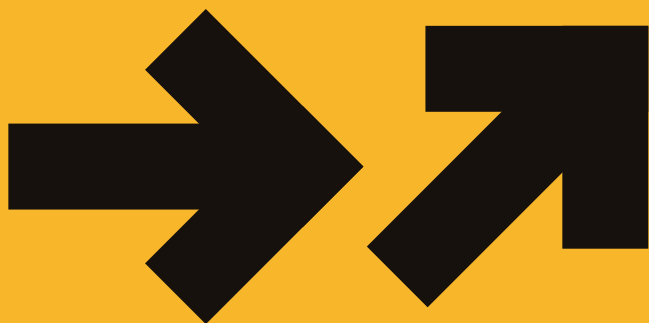
46,000 CREATIVE AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION JOBS, 16,000 BUSINESSES IN TEPC CORE AREA.

46.5%

AN ESTIMATED 46.5% OF ALL CREATIVE WORKERS ARE FREELANCE



CREATIVE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY IS STRONGLY CONCENTRATED IN TEPC LONDON AND HAS A DISPERSED AND CLUSTERED PATTERN IN NORTH KENT AND SOUTH ESSEX.



GROWTH IN FREELANCE ECONOMY (52% ACROSS WHOLE TEPC, 79% IN TEPC LONDON) EVIDENCES THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE ECONOMY AND SUGGESTS AN INCREASE IN ENTREPRENEURIALISM.

“CULTURE ISN'T AN OPTIONAL EXTRA. IT CREATES JOBS, BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER AND ENHANCES CIVIC PRIDE AND BELONGING.”

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

14K

**14,000 CULTURAL AND CREATIVE
INDUSTRY JOBS IN SOUTH ESSEX**

%%

**4.6% OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE REGION,
THAMES ESTUARY (5.9%) / UK (6.4%)**

68%

**OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS IN 2021 WERE
FREELANCE, REFLECTING THE IDENTIFIED
TREND IN THE CHANGING NATURE OF
THE CREATIVE ECONOMY NOTED IN THE
EARLIER TEPCC CASE FOR INVESTMENT.**

**THIS INDICATES THAT CREATIVE INDUSTRY
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN THE REGION IS
SUBSTANTIALLY UNDER-ESTIMATED, IF
ONLY MEASURED BY THE DATA THAT IS
CURRENTLY COLLECTED AND MADE PUBLIC.**



Detail from Vanishing Point by Mary Mattingley, commissioned by Focal Point Gallery for Estuary 2021. Southend Pier. Photo: Mark Massey

LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENTS

This report takes into account emerging ideas and large scale development initiatives that are in already either in discussion or the early planning stages already. Each of the programmes listed below has the potential, in the long term, to contribute to meeting the current high demand across South Essex for more, and better quality, creative facilities to produce, perform or present. (Evidence, pages 24 to 30).

Our key recommendations and actions (pages 32 to 46) will help to underpin the success of these longer term initiatives, by ensuring that a vibrant and healthy eco-system of freelancers and micro-businesses can grow in number and thrive within a well-networked, supportive and co-operative environment across South Essex.

THURROCK

- Purfleet Film Studios
- High House Production Park – masterplanning & new build 30,000 sq ft studios
- Tilbury Towns Fund
- Planned CPP bid
- Thames Freeport

BASILDON

- CPP – Digicult (Things Made Public)

SOUTHEND ON SEA

- Victoria Shopping Centre (meanwhile strategy in development for top floor units)
- Better Queensway – studios etc
- LGF High Street project & Unit 21 on the seafront
- Levelling up project for the Kursaal as production & presenting venue

BRENTWOOD

- Baytree Shopping Centre
- Merrymeade House
- Brentwood Centre



OUR FOCUS

Across South Essex respondents to our survey were made up of the following disciplines and included businesses, as well as individuals. Their responses has shaped the contents of this report. Across the board, the

commitment, ambition and energy of those who took part in our research was notable, with a palpable desire to connect more effectively to grasp the clear potential and opportunity in the region.

51%

VISUAL & DESIGN

23%

PERFORMANCE (INCLUDING MUSIC)

15%

SCREEN BASED MEDIA

06%

THE WRITTEN WORD

06%

SUPPORT SERVICES

PEN PORT



TRAITS



SOUTHEND ON SEA



The largest of the creative clusters across ASELA, Southend is looked to by the creatives in the other areas as the centre of cultural activity in the region. With established theatres, galleries, museums, festivals, music venues and talent development programmes for artists and young people, it already has a strong cultural offer and a large creative population – many of whom operate in a freelance capacity, outside of these venues. It has a burgeoning cultural network, established in 2019 that is functioning well but still finding its best format. Some of the key cultural spaces and events have been lost or paused as a result of the pandemic, with swift action required to ensure that these can be rebuilt and recovered. Despite this, there is a palpable sense of ambition from the sector here. There is a real opportunity to build on this energy and drive to continue to provide and build an aspirational, regional central cluster that grows from strength to strength with a culture offer that has national and international pull. Recent examples include, Estuary 2016 and 2021 which grew out of the sector based in Southend and England's Creative Coast.

FROM OUR SURVEY

**NEED FOR WORKSPACE:
HIGH (73%)**

**NEED FOR PROJECT SPACE:
HIGH (82%)**

**NEED FOR SOCIAL SPACES:
MEDIUM**

**NETWORKS:
EMERGING**



Basildon boasts a wide diversity of creative practices. Investment and focus is growing around digital specialism, evidenced through the new South Essex College, Centre for Digital Technologies and through ambitions, led by Futurecity that is shaping the Town Centre masterplan. BasildON, the Creative People and Places programme led by Things Made Public is a key driver for audiences and community creativity and offers artists commissioning opportunities and meanwhile spaces which is a fantastic catalyst for further growth. Creative practitioners themselves identified a strong need for affordable, low risk, flexible space - both to create and show/try out work and projects. Of all the ASELA locations, the network of creatives was strongest in Basildon, via the well-established Bas Arts Index. Multi-disciplinary, self-organised and active, this network is a great model for building on, across the region.

FROM OUR SURVEY

**NEED FOR WORKSPACE:
HIGH (73%)**

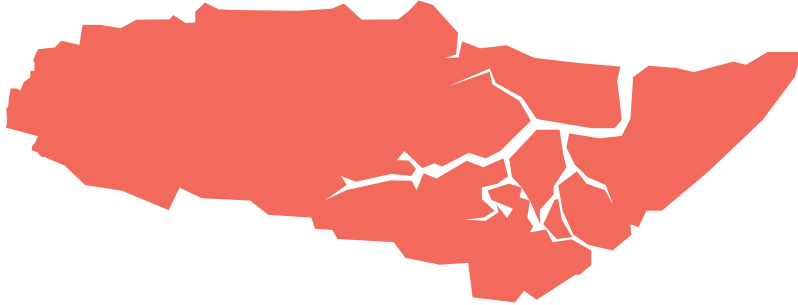
**NEED FOR PROJECT SPACE:
HIGH (79%)**

**NEED FOR SOCIAL SPACES:
HIGH**

**NETWORKS:
STRONG**

**“A COMMUNITY
WITHOUT A
STRONG ARTS
COMMUNITY IS
NO COMMUNITY
AT ALL.”**

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT.



The wild spaces, woodland and heritage of Rochford as a market town were identified as key cultural assets. Ideas were abundant around how to build the profile and activity in and around the historic Market Square, and the opportunities on the horizon offered through the development and connections to the SEE Park vision are strong. Currently, the creative community located here feel dispersed across the areas of Rochford, Rayleigh & Hockley, with no central focus to draw them closer together. Contrary to the political boundaries, they feel a close affinity to the provision and opportunities in Southend and this is where they currently look for connections and networks for work and showcase opportunities. They expressed a desire to be empowered to make things happen locally and voiced the need for better networks to each other, as well as to the Local Authorities. There was a strong desire for an affordable, informal, multi-use space that could be accessed, for both community and professional use.

FROM OUR SURVEY

**NEED FOR WORKSPACE:
HIGH (89%)**

**NEED FOR PROJECT SPACE:
ACUTE (96%)**

**NEED FOR SOCIAL SPACES:
HIGH**

**NETWORKS:
WEAK**



Brentwood's creative community sees a more natural relationship with London and North Essex, rather than looking towards the Thames, but welcomes an opportunity to feel a greater connection. Better networks, both within Brentwood and externally, we seen as a key need for the Borough. There are several small creative networks that have come together to pool resources, skills and share best practice. These were identified as an opportunity to grow into a bigger network. Similar to other ASELA locations, the Brentwood creative community identified the need for informal multi-use spaces. The Theatre is developing an immediate response to this by incorporating flexible working spaces within the building. Other possibilities and opportunities were identified within the Brentwood Centre, the Baytree Shopping Centre, Merrymeade House and the Hermit. The creative community in Brentwood identified the need for a key leadership organisation. Several organisations were named to have the potential to perform this function with support and advocacy.

FROM OUR SURVEY

**NEED FOR WORKSPACE:
MEDIUM (63%)**

**NEED FOR PROJECT SPACE:
HIGH (88%)**

**NEED FOR SOCIAL SPACES:
HIGH**

**NETWORKS:
EMERGING**

CASTLE POINT



Castlepoint creatives have a strong connection to both its near neighbours, Basildon and Southend. They look to both these locations for their creative connections and opportunities. Many of the creatives who attended our workshop had not met before and of all the ASELA locations, the creative community here felt a lack of connectivity, visibility and connection, underlining the importance of networks as well as social interaction and spaces that foster this. As key to making these creative connections, Hadleigh Old Fire Station (HOFS) is a key asset, providing vital workspace for artists as well as workshop, meeting and showcase space for the creative community. Exciting ambitions are present within the community both at HOFS (limited by not having security of tenure in their building) and for a creative space at the Castle Pub.

FROM OUR SURVEY

**NEED FOR WORKSPACE:
LOW (LESS THAN 20%)**

**NEED FOR PROJECT SPACE:
HIGH (82%)**

**NEED FOR SOCIAL SPACES:
HIGH**

**NETWORKS:
WEAK**



A strong driver for the creative community in Thurrock is a socially driven arts and culture offer. A cultural strategy is currently being shaped and led by The Beehive Community Resource Centre in partnership with artists, arts organisations and community. Recent cultural infrastructure projects at High House Production Park have provided vital, affordable workspaces, with more planned as part of a master-planning process and there is a thriving arts production happening from this space. However, a lack of social spaces, additional events and opportunities to build networks, relationships and collaborations has led to many feeling isolated from each other and the wider Borough. As with other locations, there was a strong desire to develop this networking resource through strong, localised, creative leadership. Also in common with all the other locations, the creative community here is committed, passionate, full of ideas and ambition and ready to build on the current offer.

FROM OUR SURVEY

**NEED FOR WORKSPACE:
HIGH (75%)**

**NEED FOR PROJECT SPACE:
HIGH (88%)**

**NEED FOR SOCIAL SPACES:
HIGH**

**NETWORKS:
EMERGING**

**“THE LACK OF
DATA ON THE
SELF-EMPLOYED
& FREELANCE
WORKFORCE IS
A PARTICULAR
PROBLEM FOR
THE CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES”**

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

KEY ACTION



ONS



THE ISSUE

- Cultural development leadership across the ASELA locations is inconsistent.
- This has led to vital support systems feeling patchy, not fit for purpose, or at worst creating barriers for the sector.
- strategic connectivity, understanding and development are key to continued ambition and growth of the creative industries.
- More than any other sector, the creative industries are made up of micro businesses or individuals who require additional support and capacity to ensure connectivity and access to new business and growth opportunities.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- the lack of flow of information, communication and a central place to start feeling better connected, was a dominant theme.
- 86% of survey respondents agreed that better networks with peers both regionally and nationally would be useful to them.
- 79% required access to more venues and events
- 69% better business support and advice.
- 63% better Support Systems.

THE SOLUTION

- Allocating resource to employ a shared Senior Cultural Development Role, working across ASELA.
- A knowledgeable advocate who understands the specific and unique needs and requirements of the sector and can shape these working with Local Authority colleagues across the departments of economics, regeneration, health and culture.

EXISTING AND EMERGING MODELS

- Led by the housing association, Peabody, in partnership with the GLA and arts organisations Bow Arts, Taco Arts and RTM.FM, Thamesmead has embedded culture as a key part of the large scale housing and regeneration project. With a culture team headed by an experienced curator and leader in the arts, with specialist knowledge of culture led regeneration and known for delivering challenging projects.
- Be First, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) regeneration company delivers strong leadership around culture as a driver for change within the Borough. Multiple cultural infrastructure projects have benefitted from the large-scale developments in the area. An NCIL local neighbourhoods fund has also been set up which has supported various smaller scale arts and community projects. These grants have usually been around £10,000.

**COST IMPLICATION
£80K ANNUAL FUNDING**

THE ISSUE

- Creative networks across South Essex are inconsistent and in some areas non-existent.
- There are very few informal creative/cultural spaces for people to network socially
- Good networks are what drive work, opportunity and collaborations. They are vital to a thriving cultural economy. Without them growth opportunities are missed.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- the lack of flow of information, 86% of survey respondents agreed that better networks with peers both regionally and nationally would be useful to them.
- Better networks was the most consistent and dominant theme to come from both the survey research and the consultation sessions.
- Strong networks require formal and informal meeting spaces. There is an absence of both these spaces generally, but even in cultural hubs such as High House Production Park and Thameside Theatre – these informal circulation spaces didn't exist generating creative isolation and lack of connectivity.

THE SOLUTION

- A regional creative network into which localised and practice specific networks can feed.
- Managed by a new role (see Key Recommendation One) a Senior Cultural Development Officer, working to ASELA across the region.
- Seed funding should be available for sub-regional networks to get established
- A region-wide CRM system to safely manage the data of these networks, providing key and ongoing insight into the creative sector as it grows

EXISTING AND EMERGING MODELS

There are some good examples of networks that have been established in the region, to build on:

- Bas-Arts-Index. An online directory for Basildon's creative individuals, groups and organisations, born, living, working in or making work about Basildon. It connects creatives which in turn generates activity, collaboration and supports a cohesive local arts ecology. Bas-Arts-Index is currently run by a core group of Index members on a voluntary basis but aims to become a constituted organisation in the near future.
- Essex Film Collective. Established in November 2020 by Lilly Streames, driven by need to connect better with her own industry. By March 2021 the collective had signed up over 200 members. They act as a source of information and opportunities; actively run collaborative projects; meet twice a year and have recently set up a website. There are now 3 Directors of the Collective and they are working towards a 3-tiered, paid membership system to sustain themselves
- Southend Creative & Cultural Network. Established 2020 as a communication mechanism. Secretariat is Southend Borough Council, working with multi-disciplinary, sector Steering Group. Meets quarterly with rotating chairs. Currently working towards ensuring all members utilise Visit Southend as a listings site for events and activities.
- All these networks have challenges relating to the ownership and management of data.

COST IMPLICATION
£25K ANNUAL FUNDING FOR NETWORK
ACTIVITY (EVENTS, MEETINGS, TRAVEL
COSTS, MARKETING, COMMS)

ACTION THREE - A PIONEERING, RESPONSIVE APPROACH TO CREATIVE SKILLS DELIVERY

THE ISSUE

- Current formal skills development schemes do not match the needs and make-up of the creative industries which are predominantly freelance, micro and SMEs
- Lack of awareness of the range of creative opportunities in the sector and lack of familial support for creative careers as viable employment for the future
- Decline in uptake of arts subjects at schools and consequent reduction in provision Cultural Learning Alliance (August 2020): -37% decline in arts GCSE entries 2010 to 2020, -30% decline in arts A Level entries 2010 to 2020

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- 84% of respondents were unaware of Local, Regional or National Skills Programmes for the creative sector which work well
- With large scale, regional developments, such as Purfleet Film Studios, London Resort and East London's Fashion District development a pipeline of skills is vital to both the success of those projects and to ensure that South Essex creatives and future creatives are to benefit.
- Creative intelligence will be a key skill for the future with creative jobs being amongst those least likely to be threatened by automation. 'Future of Skills & Employment in 2030' NESTA: "Creative, digital, design and engineering occupations have bright outlooks and are strongly complemented by digital technology"
- The desire to invest in the next generation was strong and there was strong engagement with the more informal training methods of Mentoring (76%), Work Experience (45%) and Volunteering (71%)

THE SOLUTION

- A partnership approach to creating a pioneering and bold new approach to an Agency model which supports micro and SME businesses to engage with formal apprenticeship or learning schemes in a 'portfolio' style - and enables those on the scheme to experience a Foundation-style training (i.e mixed set of experiences and projects) enabling them to try the myriad of possible career paths that a creative career offers.
- The cultural sector has long been advocating this approach. The pandemic seems to have created a shift at government level, with schemes such as Kick Start now in progress and flexible enough to serve the cultural sector well. As well as the flexi-job apprenticeship scheme, opening later in the year and actively seeking to fund new agencies.

EXISTING AND EMERGING MODELS

- TraC is an apprenticeship agency for construction. They employ construction trade and technical apprentices and provide them with a mix of placements on a number of different construction sites. There are 186 different careers in construction and much of the work is based around contracts - much like the Creative Industries. TraC apprentices are supported by a dedicated manager. Their success rate for onward employment for apprentices is 100%.
- An outline proposal for a social enterprise hybrid skills, and events production company has been developed in by Metal. The proposal for the Live Events Production Academy (LEPA Ltd) grew out of a partnership with South Essex College (SEC) and SEEVIC (now USP) over ten editions of Village Green festival; six editions of Village Green: Next Generation and two editions of Village Beach in Grays, Thurrock.

£600K. THIS IS AN ESTIMATE, REACHED IN CONSULTATION WITH TRAC - THE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCY FOR CONSTRUCTION, COVERING THE SOUTH EAST, INCLUDING ESSEX.



Essex Film Collective. A pan South Essex network for those involved in screen based creative work, both on screen and behind the camera. Photo: FLUD.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Family
friendly
between friends

self-provisioning

knowing

knowing

MONET
CASHA

VEN.



THE ISSUE

- High demand for multi-use creative spaces and affordable work-spaces in many of the ASELA locations.
- Economic barriers to practitioners finding stable, affordable housing and workplaces in the region
- Links to Recommendation Five around Security of Tenure.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

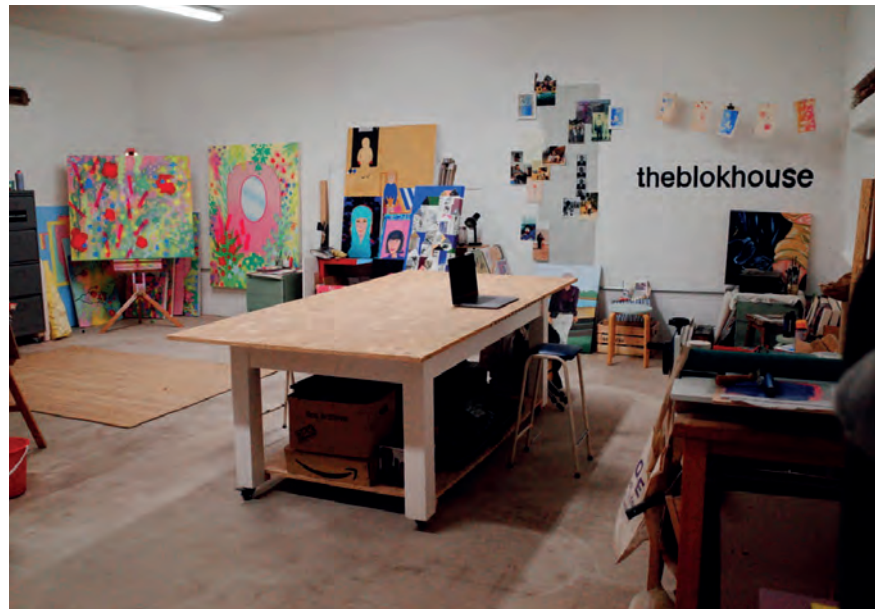
- 79% of respondents to the survey wanted more venues to showcase their work
- 63% of respondents to the survey wanted access to more studio/work space
- All of the six consultation sessions included discussion around the need for affordable, informal, flexible, 'low risk' spaces for work and showcase which were sustainable rather than pop-up/meanwhile use.

THE SOLUTION

- Appointment of a shared Senior Cultural Development Officer with knowledge of the planning process to engage at an early stage on forthcoming developments. To liaise with a network of officers, across departments at a borough level.
- As part of the South Essex Plan - a South Essex wide strategic approach for the allocation of funds for cultural and creative infrastructure towards the growth of the creative industries to include (but not limited to): art spaces, cultural centres, public artwork commissions and creative practice development initiatives.

EXISTING AND EMERGING MODELS

- The London Plan which feeds into local authority strategies and plans. The affordable workspace section of this plan was written by the Creative Land Trust. The London Plan asks local authorities to have a vision and workspace policy.
- Creative Enterprise Zones - designated areas of London where artists and creative businesses can find permanent affordable space to work; are supported to start-up and grow; and where local people are helped to learn creative sector skills and find new jobs.



THE ISSUE

- No ring fenced allocation from CIL or s106 payments for creative infrastructure in the region
- No consistent strategic approach, strong negotiations or joined-up policy across the region
- High demand for multi-use creative spaces and affordable work-spaces in many of the ASELA locations.
- Economic barriers to practitioners finding stable, affordable housing and workplaces in the region
- Links to Recommendation Five around Security of Tenure.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- 79% of respondents to the survey wanted more venues to showcase their work
- 63% of respondents to the survey wanted access to more studio/work space
- All of the six consultation sessions included discussion around the need for affordable, informal, flexible, 'low risk' spaces for work and showcase which were sustainable rather than pop-up/meanwhile use.

THE SOLUTION

- Holistic approach to the s106 three tests, striking a balance between the basic material needs of creative practitioners including affordable live/work units, and affordable creative workplace with a strong region wide s106 negotiating position.
- Improved communication to the existing skill base of local creative industry practitioners for delivery of s106 (for example open calls to graphic designer to deliver signage or wayfinding improvements, street furniture commissions for product designers or film commissions as educational or public health outreach)
- As part of the South Essex Plan - a South Essex wide strategic approach for the allocation of funds for cultural and creative infrastructure towards the growth of the creative industries to include (but not limited to): art spaces, cultural centres, public artwork commissions and creative practice development initiatives.

EXISTING AND EMERGING MODELS

- London Borough of Hackney - Shoreditch & Hoxton Art Fund Thousands to benefit from new Shoreditch and Hoxton arts and cultural programme (hackney.gov.uk) The fund, one of the first initiatives in the Council's Arts and Cultural Strategy, has been created by using the income from a planning levy charged on new development in Shoreditch, called Section 106 contributions. All grants must be invested in art and culture-led projects that benefit the local community, with more than £200,000 remaining to fund further projects in the next two years.

**COST IMPLICATION:
SEE INDIVIDUAL ACCELERATOR
PROJECTS FOR DETAIL.**



"I DO HAVE A STUDIO SPACE BUT IT IS NOT SUITABLE TO MY NEEDS. COST AND AVAILABILITY MEAN IT IS ROOM ONLY WITH NO ACCESS TO FACILITIES."

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



RECOMMENDATION THREE - KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE TO STRENGTHEN SECTOR SUPPORT

THE ISSUE

- A need for leadership and advocacy to build understanding around role of culture in regeneration, social impact, 'good growth', health and wellbeing, economic prosperity and place-making.
- Lack of understanding and knowledge about the creative sector and the key ingredients for an environment in which they can thrive and grow.
- Lack of knowledge amongst creative practitioners about the planning, licencing and other vital support systems in the UK
- Lack of knowledge about the creative industries amongst those involved in planning, property and other key areas of partnership and support.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- evidence was collected regarding businesses not fitting neatly into criteria for access to Business support, grants and loan schemes. The links to job creation as the key indicator for growth and productivity is not a good fit a sector that thrives on individuals, micro businesses and clusters. Other measures of success and growth are required.
- 63% - identified need for better Support Systems
- 68% - for practical training.
- 69% - for better Business Skills

THE SOLUTION

- Appointment of a shared Senior Cultural Development Officer (See Recommendation One) to liaise with a network of officers, across departments at a borough level.
- Training and knowledge exchange opportunities for local Cllrs, Officers, arts organisations, community groups and other stakeholders via specialist courses to improve knowledge and relationships as well as empower with technical knowledge for effective decision making at planning stage, commissioning artworks, reducing reliance on specialist external consultants.
- The establishment of an artist-led regional 'best practice charter' for commissioning public art via s106 and other funding opportunities, with guidance on setting clear briefs, methods of commissioning (including open calls), paying artists, facilitating the delivery of artworks and the decision-making process for assessing proposals.
- Alongside this, the training and knowledge exchange opportunities will provide insight, research and real-life, regional examples, to help with a better understanding of the fundamental value and contribution of the arts to a healthy society.

**COST IMPLICATION
MINIMAL. THIS IS ABOUT TIME TAKEN TO
LOOK AT BEST PRACTICE AND EXPLORE
HOW TO IMPLEMENT.**



RECOMMENDATION FOUR - REWRITE THE STORY - INVESTMENT NOT SUBSIDY

THE ISSUE

- A better understanding of the sector - and how to create the optimum conditions to support growth and development across the region.
- A number of key, home-grown organisations that provide vital support to the freelance ecosystem do not have security of tenure in their buildings. (TOMA / The Old Waterworks / HOFs).
- Meanwhile use can be great as a catalyst in some situations, but in the longer term means that funding, long-term planning and business growth are stalled.
- Creative Industries are a transient sector. They often move to where work and opportunities exist. Demand for project and workspace / poor access to networks and opportunities can all lead to businesses and individuals moving out of an area.
- Poor networks mean that many opportunities for work / projects are missed by local businesses and talent.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- Across all the workshops, anecdotal evidence was collected regarding available support not being a good fit for the required need.
- New measures of success, growth and reasons for support are required.
- 63% - identified need for better Support Systems
- 69% - for better Business Skills
- 68% - for practical training

THE SOLUTION

- Invest in current infrastructure, energy and talent that is already here alongside the development and attraction of new businesses.
- Invest time in Recommendation Three - to build a knowledge exchange to develop better understanding and advocacy for the sector
- Explore Social Impact measures for investment into the Creative Sector
- Invest in the Creative Industries to deliver on statutory ambitions

**COST IMPLICATION
MINIMAL. THIS IS ABOUT TIME TAKEN TO
LOOK AT BEST PRACTICE AND EXPLORE
HOW TO IMPLEMENT.**



RECOMMENDATION FIVE - AN AMBITIOUS CREATIVE & CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR SOUTH ESSEX ESTUARY PARK

THE ISSUE

- South Essex Estuary Park is bold and exciting vision for clean, connected and accessible green space across South Essex. The vision is holistic, tackling the climate crisis, good, green growth, health and leisure alongside new green/blue infrastructure.
- There is a fantastic opportunity to build culture, creativity and the creative industries sector into the heart of this vision from the outset. A commitment to great design, inclusive local businesses, creative work spaces and commissioned artworks, events and activities will ensure that this vision benefits, reaches and impacts on communities in sustainable and impactful ways.

THE DRIVER/EVIDENCE FOR NEED

- This long-term vision for South Essex can deliver on many of the drivers listed in our above 4 recommendations - providing a macro vision to connect and house all of the above needs of the sector.
- A declared vision for the sector, within SEE Park ambitions will provide motivation, excitement and a clear sense of contribution for the creative industries. Acting as a sector and as a region - rather than in silos and smaller clusters which make visibility and connectivity much harder.
- The SEE Park vision for South Essex with the creative industries sector as a key driver will be a significant sector-leader in the wider vision for a Thames Estuary Production Park and Creative Estuary with the potential to attract further investment if articulated clearly.

THE SOLUTION

- To create a strong, unique and clear strategy for the role of culture and the creative industries within the SEE Park vision for South Essex.
- To ensure that this is created as one of the key elements of the vision, rather than an 'adornment' after the infrastructure is created.

COST IMPLICATION

We would suggest the investment goes into employment of a senior cultural development role (see Action One) and the strengthening of networks (see Action Two).

These two actions will be key to ensuring a strong cultural strategy that is built in partnership and conversation with, the creative industries sector - and then actioned.



The Tilbury Docker puppet, created by Kinetika, based in Purfleet, Thurrock. Photo: courtesy of the Port of Tilbury

ACCELERATE PROJECTS



ATOR S



ACCELERATOR 01 ESSEX WRITERS HOUSE AT HIGH HOUSE

FEASIBILITY: £60K
CAPITAL: £850K
REVENUE: £95K per annum
PROGRAMME: £50K

**WHAT:
FOR:** Essex Writers House
Writers (all genres); Artists;
Education; Community; Events;
Professional Development

WHO: New organisation CIC or
social enterprise with
partnership from Metal, Essex
Book Festival, Uni of Essex
Centre for Place Writing, Uni
of Manchester Centre for
Place, National Writers
Centre Norwich, New Writing
South, South Essex College,
USP, Arvon

OWNERSHIP: Thurrock Council (HHPP Board)

**NEXT
ACTION:** Feasibility study,
Development of Business
model, Advocacy for possible
funders, stakeholders and
partners

ACCELERATOR 02 TILBURY RIVERSIDE STUDIOS

FEASIBILITY: Underway as part of Tilbury
Towns Fund
CAPITAL: £250K need (remaining 5%
match on £5m bid)

**REVENUE:
PROGRAMME:** TBC

WHAT: 6 x CI studios (20-30sq m
each), Marketplace and events
space, new public realm

FOR: Creative Industry SME and
freelancers, Community, Events
WHO: Forth Ports, Tilbury on the
Thames Trust

OWNERSHIP: Forth Ports

NEXT ACTION: HLF bid for £5m (EOI
accepted), Tilbury Town Fund
outcome June, 5% match to
find, advocacy and design
development

ACCELERATOR 03 BAS ARTS AT WAT TYLER COUNTRY PARK

FEASIBILITY: £18K
CAPITAL: £200K
REVENUE: £95K per annum
PROGRAMME: £50K

WHAT: Bas Arts Index
FOR: Creative Industry SME
Freelancers, artists and
makers, 2040 sq ft rented
studios , 500 sq ft hired
space, membership scheme,
events, specialist hires,
workshop, education, events,
networks.

WHO: Bas Arts Index – working with
the support of The Old
Waterworks and Metal (both
based in Southend)

OWNERSHIP: Basildon Council

NEXT ACTION: Feasibility study,
Development of Business
model, Advocacy

NOTES:

- Sited within the heart of the Central Thames Parkland area - first phase of the SEE Thames Park vision
- much is known about this building already through the Innovation Warehouse work
- this project can work alongside existing tenants and conference centre at the front of building
- relatively low cost to set up – many CIs prefer 'raw' spaces.
- develops a home-grown, self-organised and talented collective of creatives.
- demand is clear from the survey results - 73% of respondents from Basildon identified need for access to workspace.
- this is a different proposition and serving a different but complementary need to Open Labs & Dicult and CPP activities.
- N.B. This model and proposal is applied to this building but is transportable to other spaces.

ACCELERATOR 04 TOMA & TOW -SECURITY OF TENURE

FEASIBILITY: £25K
CAPITAL: £600K purchase
£1.5m renovation and fit out
REVENUE: £85K per annum
PROGRAMME: £50K

WHAT: Studios, creative co-worker
space, exhibition, gallery
space and shop, possible F&B,
residency space

FOR: Creative Industry SME,
Freelancers, artists and
makers, alt. education,
membership scheme, events,
specialist hires, workshop,
networks, 4725 sq ft over 4
floors

WHO: TOMA & The Old Waterworks

NEXT ACTION: Feasibility, Advocacy,
Development of business
model, fundraising

NOTES:

- These figures are based on a currently empty building in Southend. Since our report began, this specific opportunity is no longer viable. However, we have left the figures and the opportunity within our report, as illustrative of the size, costs and usage – whilst the active search for another property continues.
- develops a home-grown, self-organised and talented collective of creatives.
- demand is clear from the survey results - 73% of respondents from Southend identified need for access to workspace.
- this model and proposal is applied to this building but is transportable to other spaces.

ACCELERATOR 05 ROCHFORD STUDIOS & MARKET

FEASIBILITY: £10K
CAPITAL: £2-300K purchase £400K renovation and fit out
REVENUE: £65K per annum
PROGRAMME: £50K

WHAT: Studios, creative co-worker space /exhibition/gallery space and indoor market-style retail spaces, recording studio & shared facilities for flexible use

FOR: Creative Industry SME, Freelancers, artists and makers, education, events, workshop, networks

WHO: Would need to find (partners from nearby)

OWNERSHIP: Privately owned

NEXT ACTION: Feasibility, Advocacy, Development of business model, fundraising

NOTES:

- based on ex-Budgens (now sold) as example of use, scale & cost
- space had been empty for over 3 years
- on market originally for £400K – est. reduction
- prime position – close to market square
- pedestrianised outside – lends itself to events
- demand is clear from the survey results – 89% of respondents from Rochford identified need for access to workspace.
- need for cultural leadership was acknowledged by LA
- the model articulated for Blockbusters and The Old Speed Boat Museum could be applied to this building.

ACCELERATOR 06 HADLEIGH OLD FIRE STATION -SECURITY OF TENURE

WHAT: Artist studios, community events, community cinema, hire

FOR: Community arts/ artists, makers/ hire

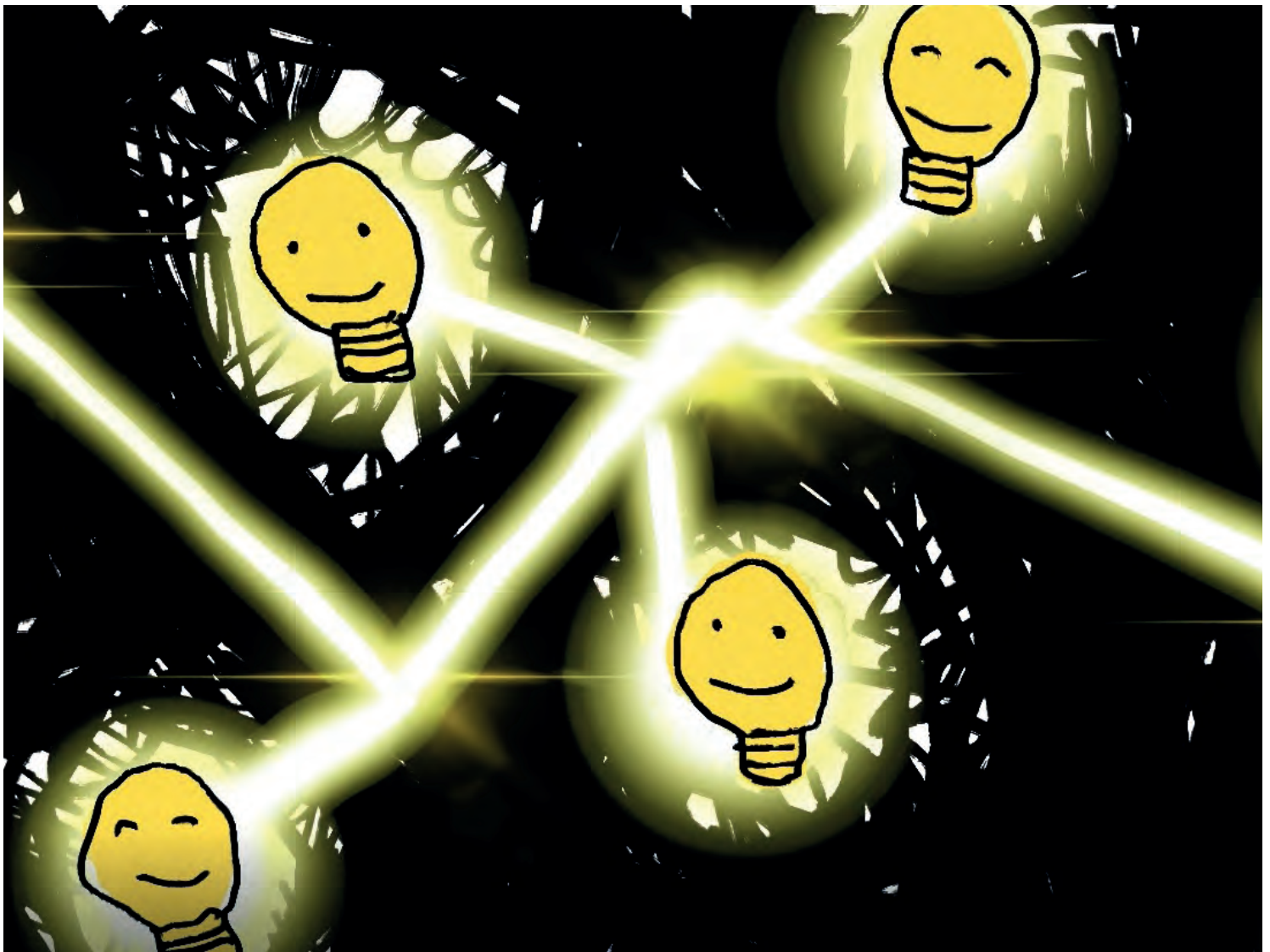
WHO: Essex County Council /Castle Point Regeneration Partnership

OWNERSHIP: Castle Point Council

NEXT ACTION: The Creative Industries are much more productive when they have security and can build and grow productivity, partnerships and projects from a position of confidence and

ACCELERATOR 07 CREATIVE BRENTWOOD

- WHAT:** Burgeoning number of small creative networks emerging
- WHO:** Led by the Theatre, the Council, independent artists, groups and businesses
- NEXT ACTION:** The consultation identified the need for a lead organisation to take the role of catalyst and convener. Discussions need to be had with some key organisations as to who, with support, could be the driver. Additional conversations need to be had with key venues to discuss ambitions for developing a creative hub.



NATIVITY

1 In the beginning, they did the Nativity. Everyone in it was white, with the main characters in white: Mary, Joseph, a whole chorus of angels and a baby. The baby, they said, was the son of God, or as they call him at a church, "The King of Kings." To prove it, these rich, glamorous and earthy kings came all the way from "The East" (which is Italy) to visit him. These kings worshipped the baby and gave him really expensive gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. The thinking was that if even these rich powerful potent men worshipped the baby, then we should too.

Over a few hundred years, after death in circumstances of the story, most Christians would agree that the first king to visit the baby came from Europe. The second came from "Somewhere in Asia." No kings came from the Americas or Australia as "lucky." The Christians hadn't found out about them yet. Despite his lack of pigment or, more likely, because of it, the third king to visit the baby was assigned by the Christians as "King of Africa" (Hathazai). And so the story went for a thousand years: Three White Men.

Yet, as white Hathazai look inappropriately whitened, I found his two colleagues, another figure joined into being. Creeping onto the canvas on candlelit canvas, Hathazai's servant, a black man. For years he kept in service to an occupational problem — an antebellum, abolitionist associate to pose white Hathazai's "African-ness." Hathazai's servant peeps over shoulders, waiting for the bourgeoisie and then, suddenly, in the 19th Century, he strikes. For blackness as a sign is never enough. Hathazai's servant snatches the gift of myrrh from the hands of his white master, and assumes his name and position too. Hathazai becomes a black man, Scripture says he prophesies death.

2 To become Hathazai, you must hang out in your local town. Eventually, you'll be approached by some suitable painter, van Aest. Admiring, he'll show a picture from the workshop. They'll talk to you, claiming "Hah, blackness!" or "What 'niggers are those?" or "Look mama, a Negro!" or "You have just the perfect complexion!" etc., etc. And it's right there in the act of tuning from your brown skin to their skin, knowing that you become that subject — not for the first time you become that Black friend, you become Hathazai. They'll invite you to their studio. And you'll turn and you'll say: "What is the key?"

In the light of the studio you do the Nativity. When you get to their studio you bring out your little bag. You pull out a couple items you picked from the last time you sat for — a turban, a little pearl earring, a cuff. They always get excited when you bring that out — start talking about "authenticity," how you're the real deal. And you are — you're Hathazai. African King. Scripture says you prophesies death.

3 Life is full of turning points. Depending on which way you turn, different worlds come into view. Sometimes we might just examine ourselves in the address of an artist, a photographer, a stylist or a politician. We might turn to a name other than the one we usually see, out of ease, curiosity or exhaustion. In becoming Hathazai, you don't a path that's been





Before Christians knew about Africans they assumed everything West of Britain and South of Cassin's Tropic was either under the sea or too hot to inhabit. The only reason Christians thought that the African regions were held above water was because of goods "Bene Cassin". The Christian by people who were just about reaching water under the tyrannical reign of the kings and his bachelors. The Church, were pretty vexed when African immigrants started to appear. Harsh, dark, and worst of all, not to appear. Harsh, dark, and worst of all, not to appear. Harsh, dark, and worst of all, not to appear. Harsh, dark, and worst of all, not to appear.

What they didn't understand is that mimicry is at once resistance and menace. In order to make Balthazar fit in the story they had to give him one of the gifts. I think in the story they had to give him one of the gifts. I think in the story they had to give him one of the gifts. I think in the story they had to give him one of the gifts.

All human orders, from the smallest society of nomadic hunter-gatherers, to the large-scale societies of Egypt, China, the Greeks and the Romans, have mapped their social rules onto the stars, or imagined supernatural beings, or, often, both. But, as humans almost as soon as we do this mapping, we repress the whole process. We forget we authored these rules, that we wrote their corresponding mythologies, and we pretend as if the social order has come down to us fully formed through the extrahuman agency of supernatural imaginary beings. This makes the rules seem inevitable, unchangeable, and our behaviour more determined.

Even in our now secular order, the extrahuman agency on which our authority is now propped is no longer supernatural, but rather the imagined entity of Race.

And that's what you think about as you look up at the fireworks beading across the Croydon smog, on New Year's Eve, 1999.

At the dawn of the new millennium, we did The Nativity. They talked about multiculturalism as if it was new. As if we hadn't sat for the Visitation for years. Where do you think Balthazar found such a handsome model? For God's sake, incongruously in grandma's wimple! The thought I was being peep over shoulders, writing Balthazar's name on his gift, was that I was here to deliver the message.

THE END

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Shaun C Badham
Bas Arts Index
Visual Arts

Maxine Newell
Bas Arts Index
Illustration

Laura Whiting
Bas Arts Index
Architecture

TOMA

Emma Edmondson
Visual Arts

THE OLD WATERWORKS

Warren Harper
Visual Arts

PIXELWORKS

Lucy Harris
Film & Media

CREATIVE ESTUARY

Lorraine Cox
(Workspace)

DANIEL HARDING STUDIO LTD.

Daniel Harding
Graphic Design

SAMUEL RESTORICK

Graphic Design

METAL (SOUTHEND)

Colette Bailey
Mixed Disciplines

Andrea Cunningham
Mixed Disciplines

Hannah Clarke
Mixed Disciplines

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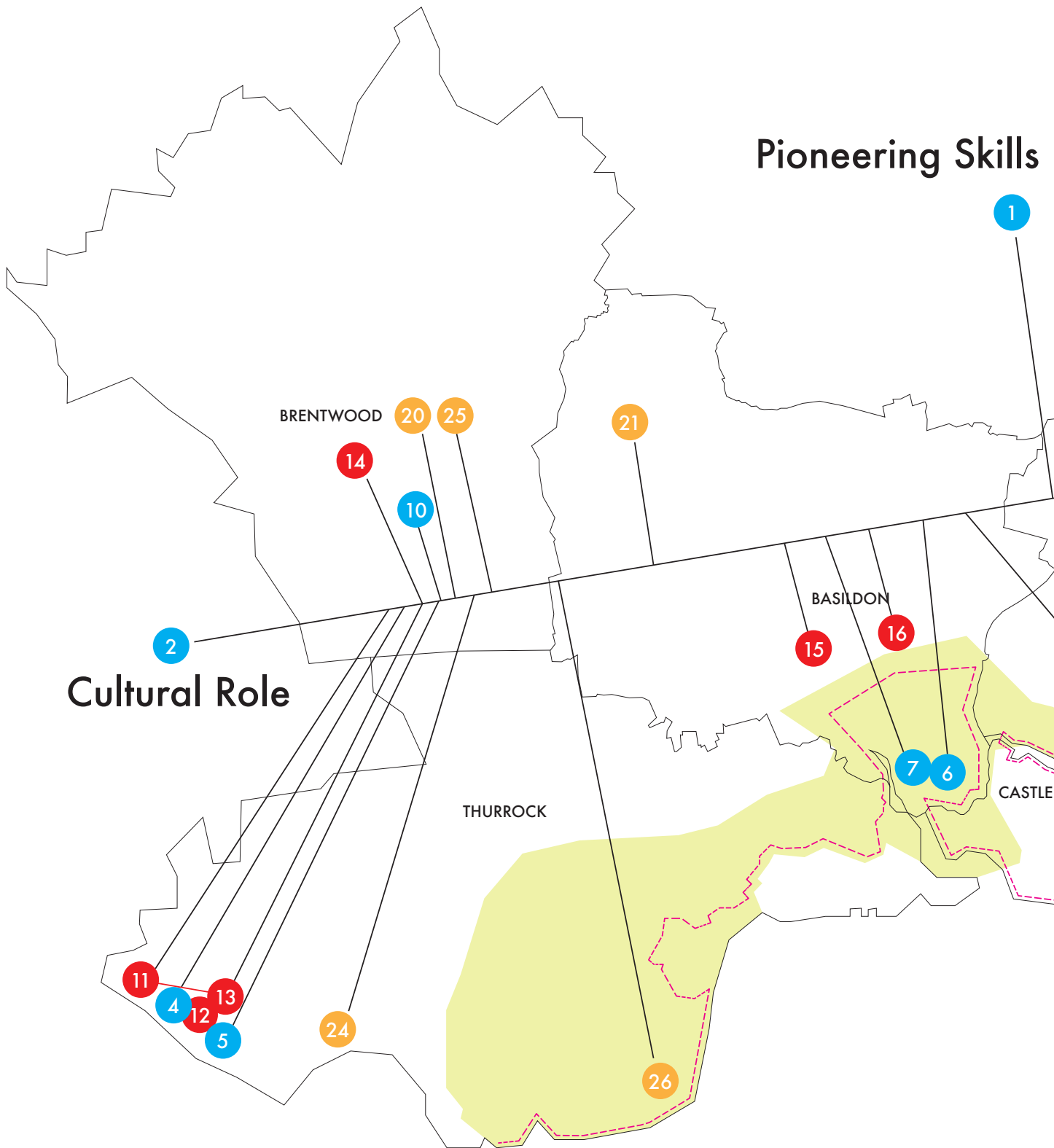
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- Working Together for a Faster, Smarter, More Sustainable Economic Recovery (March 2021, SELEP)



Lolly Adams. Precarious Straits - survival on Southend's new coast, Southend-under-Sea, TOMA Project Space. Photo: Tessa Hallmann.

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- 2 Senior Cultural Role
- 3 Invest in Networks
- 4 High House
- 5 Tilbury Old Rail Station

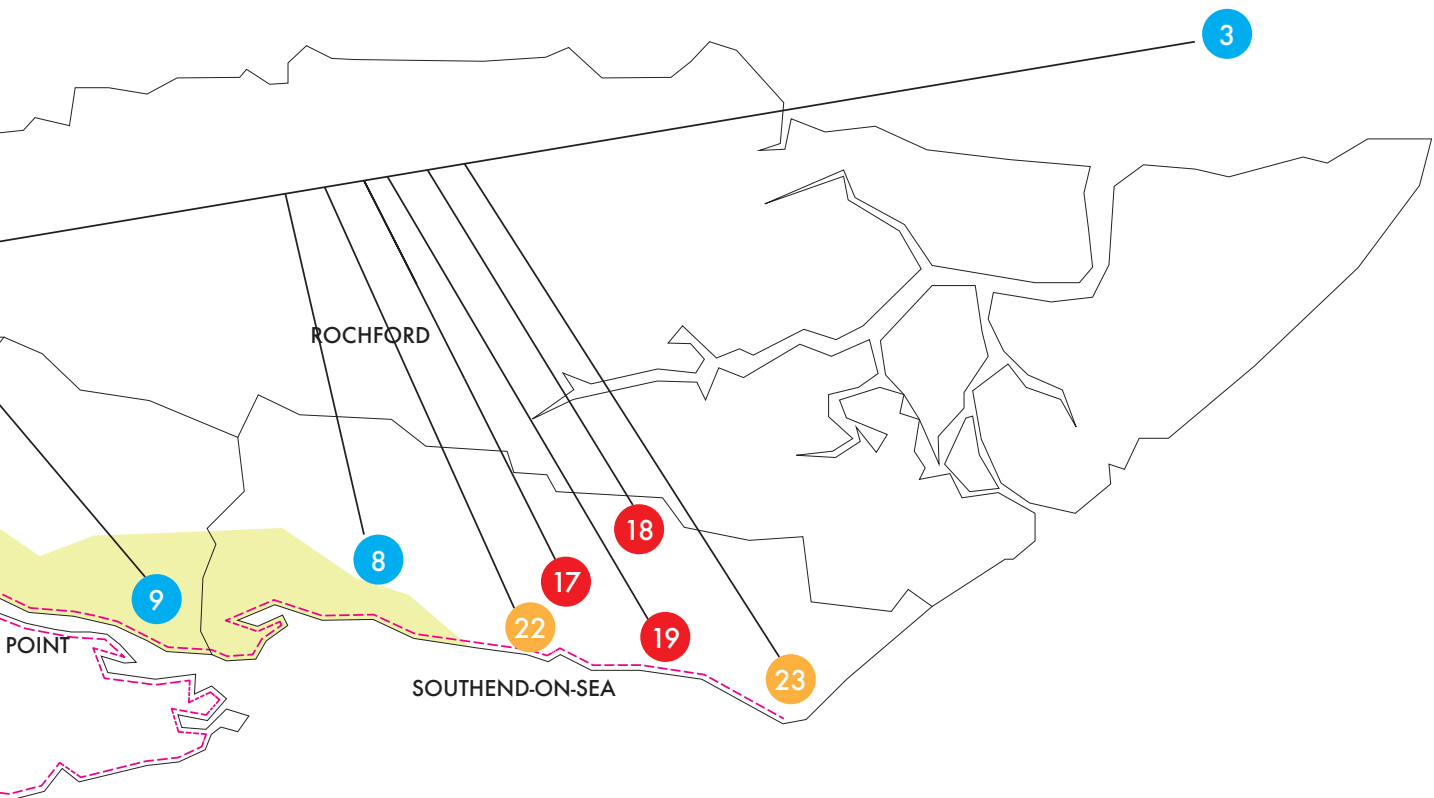
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Programme

Strong Networks



A snapshot of the clustering of the creative industries across South Essex using the data from our survey. The map shows the following:-

- RED dots: Key large-scale developments in planning or underway
- YELLOW dots: Key opportunities / connector projects
- BLUE dots: Key Actions as anchors and location of Accelerator Opportunities
- GREEN area: Location for SEE Park phase one – Central Thames Marshland
- RED dotted line: Thames Path

COMMISSIONED BY:



RESEARCH & WRITTEN BY:

Metal



CREATIVE
ESTUARY

