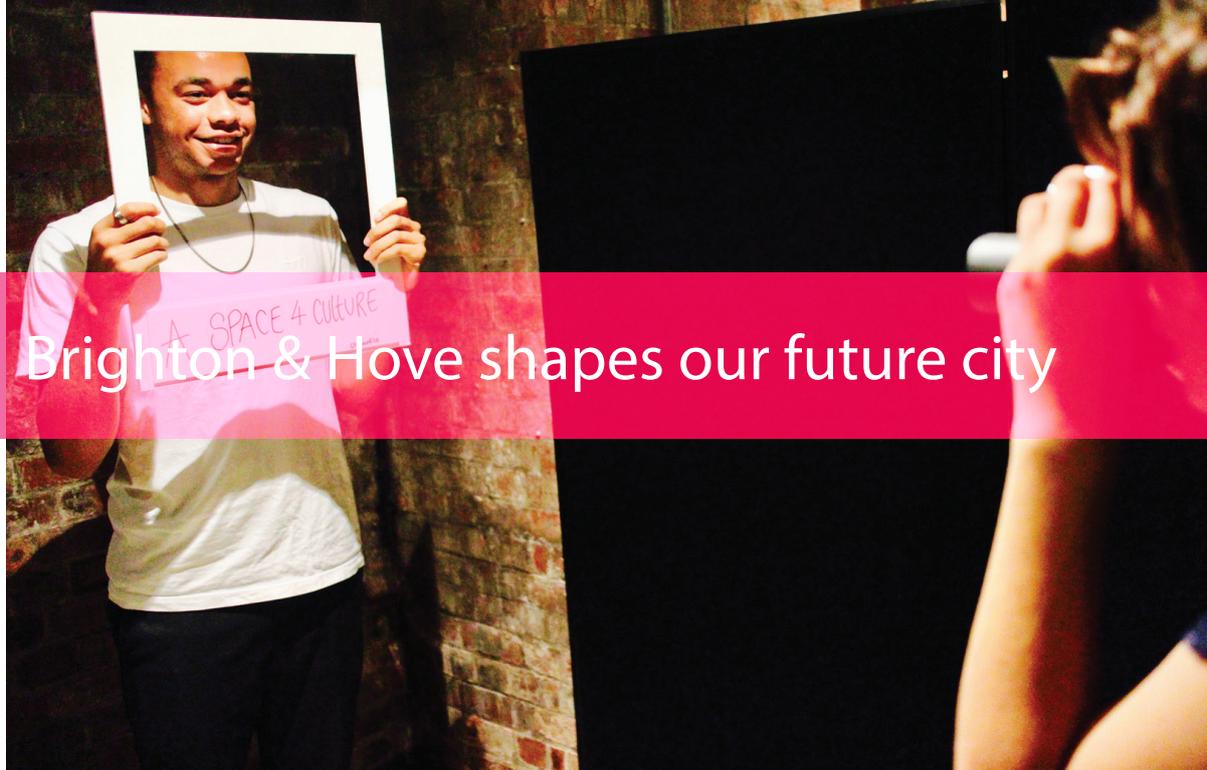


EURO
CITIES



Brighton & Hove shapes our future city

Creative programmes for young people

Brighton & Hove has developed an ambitious collaborative model for coordinating cultural activities to enable young people to play their part in a fast-changing world. 'Our Future City' is not only growing creative and digital skills, enhancing wellbeing and providing new routes into work. It is also showing how to sustain action and positively impact the life chances and wellbeing of young people.



We focus on developing cultural activities and engagement for children and young people - putting them at the heart of that and working as a collective - a movement - to support them.

Peter Chivers, head of music and arts, Brighton Dome and Festival



Brighton & Hove sees creativity as a 'super power' capable of helping people solve problems, adapt to change, work well with others and become more resilient. Convinced that these skills and abilities are critical for its future health, the city wanted to make sure every child and young person is given the chance to develop them. It recognised, however, that despite having a vibrant arts and culture scene, the city lacked a sustainable strategy for providing equal access to cultural education and opportunities for living a creative life.

The city resolved to design a cohesive, long term programme that would overcome the barriers and inequalities that were preventing the power of culture and creativity from being fully harnessed. This meant overturning traditional ideas of the place of culture, creativity and education by adopting a cross-sector, cross-agenda approach. It also meant focusing on young people living in poverty whose talents and potential would otherwise be wasted. These decisions determined the programme's cornerstones: it would be driven by need, and designed and shaped by young people.

Embedding creativity

To move away from isolated arts projects to a new era in which creativity and young people are at the heart of economic and social reform, the city first set up an oversight board and a consultation process. The board brings together the city administration and cultural, educational, health and business organisations - and represents the wider partner network on which the collective approach relies. The 10 month consultation asked 1,000 children, young people and adults what the city could do to improve the lives and life chances of young people.

With needs clarified by this process, the second phase of 'Our Future City' could begin. The task of this three-year delivery programme is to respond to identified needs through the co-creation of activities for developing creative

cities in action

November 2018

where: Brighton & Hove, UK
what: participation
when: 2015 - 2019

thinking skills, behaviours, and employability and ways to wellbeing through arts, culture, digital and heritage experiences. Network partners get involved on a voluntary basis, achieving their own aims while simultaneously contributing to the programme's goals.

Enabling action

The programme is coordinated by an independent team supported by the city council, the original oversight board and working groups. When activities are proposed, small council teams are put together to make them happen. Financial support comes from Arts Council England via Artsworld, part of a network of organisations that connect the cultural and education sectors, partners' budgets and fundraising. The programme set up a Fundraisers Group which has secured over €1 million.

Activities are delivered through the state school system as well as more informal learning settings. They are themed, and linked to the programme's goals, through the use of three hashtags: #BeCreative, #BeWell and #BeDigital. A fourth hashtag - #BeCollective - relates to events and training that encourage and support collective action, knowledge sharing and skills development among activity enablers. In the last year, 668 professionals have been involved in creative thinking activity and development programmes and 140 in activities to improve cross-sector working.



We're mixing the old with the new. It's a great way to get to know the collections and think about where they came from. I'll be thinking about the museums in a new way from now on.

**Charlie Snow, contributor,
'Remix the Museum!' competition**

Opening up opportunities

Activities under the #BeCreative banner range from summer art workshops at the city's museums to a music marathon showcasing youngsters' talents and a year-long mentoring programme for emerging theatre companies. In the city's schools, 250 young people have helped develop #BeCreative thinking models which are now being rolled out to reach 6500 pupils. Nineteen schools have achieved the Artsmark creative quality standard and 200 children have gained the Arts Award for creative exploration and leadership.



To date, #BeWell activities have reached 400 children and 100 professionals have received #BeWell training. Work with schools to explore wellbeing needs has led to some unique and powerful projects. When one primary school worked with a dancer to explore feelings of belonging and overcoming anxiety, for example, it observed a marked increase in support between the children. Secondary school support targets pupils with emotional issues and creative solutions range from songwriting to making 3D printed keepsakes.

Over 4000 young people have taken part in #BeDigital activities. These include a youth-led conference, part of Brighton Digital Festival, focused on digital wellbeing and the jobs of the future. Here a creative marketing workshop enabled youngsters to run a campaign for the Festival and an exhibition showcased the winning entries in a competition to bring museum collections to life through animated GIFs.

Sustaining impact

'Our Future City' has demonstrated a clear and positive impact on everyday city life and been cited by the UK's national arts funding body as an 'important example' of a cultural education partnership. Its impact owes much to its novel, needs-based approach and also, says the team, to the support of three senior council officials. This means the programme can tap into their strategic insight and plug into their various agendas while remaining fleet of foot in its work with grassroots organisations.

The future of 'Our Future City' looks bright, for three reasons. It has established a strong new civil alliance across professional fields and the public, private and third sectors. A 10-year strategy has been built into the programme which is underpinned by continuous, rigorous evaluation, monitoring and adaptation. And this task is enhanced by innovative new tools, developed with an academic partner, for evidencing the impact of cultural work.

