INSPIRING CAMBRIDGE

Making arts and culture central to a successful, sustainable future

This document sets out a shared vision for the potential of arts and culture to take a leading role in the future of Cambridge and its surroundings.
Cambridge is a city of arts and culture, renowned for its remarkable architectural heritage, its museums, music, theatre, visual arts and literature. With two universities, a year round calendar of festivals and plenty of parks and green spaces there is a wealth of things to do and see. Cambridge’s arts and cultural sector is wide and varied. Arts and culture don’t just happen in cultural venues, but are found in people’s homes, on our streets, in schools, libraries, community centres, hospitals, online and on the move.

Cambridge is a crucible of excellence and expertise. It is the home of world changing ideas, knowledge, innovation and creativity. These factors have combined to make Cambridge the thriving place that it is today.

1 Cambridge has more events per head of population than any other city in the UK.

1 In 2014 Cambridge was voted the best UK city for culture at the Conde Nast Travel Awards.
Cambridge attracts visitors from all around the world – to study, work and enjoy this extraordinary place. It is also a city that is growing rapidly. We are ambitious about the future and want to make the city even more vibrant and appealing.

Arts and culture have a vital role to play in the shaping of the city and the wider region. It has a tradition of innovation, and the cultural sector has an essential role of sustaining and expanding that tradition across Greater Cambridge.

Cambridge Arts and Cultural Leaders, consulting with the cultural sector in the city, drafted this shared vision for the arts and culture to be at the heart of Greater Cambridge. Working together we will embed arts and culture in the development of Greater Cambridge for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors.

We have identified the following ambitions:

1. connecting the whole community through arts and cultural activity
2. exploiting our rich cultural assets to become a world leading location for cultural learning and innovation
3. contributing to sustainable growth
4. developing a creative welcome, making the city’s excellent cultural offer more easily accessible.
Connecting the whole community through arts and cultural activity — across areas and sectors, arts and culture bring people together and facilitate the exchange of ideas. Our arts and cultural sector supports the connections needed to create a genuinely collaborative and curious Greater Cambridge.

When people get involved in things they feel passionate about, like arts and culture, they can shape and contribute to what adds value and meaning to their lives. Be it music, computer games, the natural and historic environment, the visual arts, literature or museum collections that inspire creativity across the arts and sciences, culture is critical to our economic prosperity, our collective quality of life and our individual well-being.

Cambridge has more museums, galleries and collections in a square mile than anywhere else in the UK outside London.

“Cambridge is a city of festivals, from new work at the Cambridge Junction to Carols at Kings on Christmas Eve. With literature, science, folk, film, music, theatre and ideas festivals there is something for everyone.”

The Central Library in Cambridge is the fourth busiest public library in the country attracting 850,000 visitors each year.
Exploiting our rich cultural assets to develop a world leading cultural education offer — in the broadest sense for people of all ages, developing potential and creating opportunities. Arts and cultural activities offer people the opportunity to imagine and reflect on their own futures.

As well as making a substantial contribution to formal education it offers continuous learning opportunities and space for mental refreshment. Cambridge's excellent arts and cultural sector presents opportunities to see things anew, chances to experience something different and alternative ways to engage in important conversations.

- Each year there are 50,000 visits to children's and family shows at the Cambridge Arts Theatre alone.

- Britten Sinfonia deliver 120 education sessions a year as well as running the Britten Academy for gifted young players.

- The popular Sonic Pi Summer School project has been teaching coding with music at the Cambridge Junction.

Photographs
Top: Dick Whittington, Cambridge Arts Theatre. Photograph Richard Hubert Smith
Bottom left: Michael Rosen at Cambridge Literary Festival. Photograph Chris Boland
Bottom right: Cambridge Junction, Rapademic. Photograph Kitty McCutcheon
Contributing to sustainable growth in the city — an active and visible arts and cultural sector will contribute to a healthy and vibrant city-region. Greater Cambridge is growing rapidly. We are committed to ensuring that the growth is good for the whole of the area and the people it serves. It is not possible to have successful growth without sustainable cultural development. We want to ensure that the benefits of growth are felt by everyone.

By connecting individuals, communities, sectors and disciplines, arts and culture will be vital to the creative development and growth of Greater Cambridge and its position internationally. Because of their capacity to connect, arts and culture are able to play a vital role in the creative development and growth of Greater Cambridge, socially and economically.

> When a city has a strong cultural offering it certainly and undoubtedly enhances economic growth.  

*Jane Paterson-Todd*  
Chief Executive, Cambridge Ahead

- Estimates vary, but Cambridge is expected to grow between 20% and 30% in the next 15 years.

- Directly and indirectly the arts and cultural sector make a significant contribution to the economy of the city, both in their own right and through supporting associated industries such as tourism and the creative industries.

- The members of the Cambridge Arts and Leaders group have a collective turnover of over £30 million, this is just a small part of the complex interlinked cultural ecology which makes up the creative economy in the city.

- The Cambridge Arts Network has over 1100 members.
Developing a creative welcome, making the city’s excellent cultural offer more easily accessible — drawing on the talents of artists and the cultural sector, creating opportunities for residents, new arrivals and visitors.

We want to help develop a more open, accessible, and creative welcome to those arriving in Greater Cambridge, as well as to people already living here.

The people of Cambridge make the arts a vital part of its offer to residents and visitors by creating events like Strawberry Fair, Mill Road Winter Fair and Cambridge Open Studios.

Every July 300 artists take part in Cambridge Open Studios, inviting the public into their work places across the city over four weekends.

Cambridge is home to world class music companies that tour the world, as well as performing ‘at home’ in the city.

“It is this spirit of adventure that has won Britten Sinfonia a reputation as one of the UK’s most forward-thinking musical ensembles.”

Financial Times
Cambridge Arts and Cultural Leaders seek to develop arts and culture in Greater Cambridge by taking a strategic and long term approach to its development, for the benefit of the people that live and work here, its growing population, and those that visit. Since the launch of this strategy in 2015 we have been working to develop the relationships and networks that will enable us to deliver on our aspirations.

We have an ambitious action plan for the next three years and are keen to work with groups and individuals who share our aspirations.

The Cambridge Arts and Cultural Leaders group currently comprises directors from (alphabetically):

- Academy of Ancient Music
- Anglia Ruskin University
- Britten Sinfonia
- Cambridge Arts Theatre
- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridge Film Trust
- Cambridge Junction
- Cambridge Literary Festival
- Cambridge Live
- Cambridge Music Festival
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- The Fitzwilliam Museum
- Kettle’s Yard
- Museum of Cambridge
- University of Cambridge Museums
- University of Cambridge Public Engagement Team
- Wysing Arts Centre

The 17 members of the Cambridge Arts and Cultural Leaders have a turnover of over £30 million, employing over 350 people, working with some 2000 volunteers and providing events and activities for over 2.5 million visits a year.

To put this in context, the population of Cambridge was 123,867 in the 2011 census, including 24,488 students.

For further information:

🔗 [www.cam.ac.uk/inspiringcambridge](http://www.cam.ac.uk/inspiringcambridge)
✉️ can@cambridge.gov.uk

January 2017