

Creativity = growth *and* happiness

Lifting all our spirits

Creativity can add solace, joy and meaning to our everyday lives. At a personal level engaging in creative activities provides a space to connect with others, and can help with stress, depression and loneliness.

At a local level, investing in culture regenerates high streets, and creates pride in communities everywhere.

Delivering East Suffolk's Cultural Strategy

Strategic objectives to enhance lives through culture:

1. East Suffolk's cultural and creative economy will thrive
2. Young people will have opportunities to cultivate creative careers, with clear pathways for skills, talent and career development.
3. Communities will have access to cultural participation opportunities which benefit health and wellbeing.
4. Enable East Suffolk's cultural sector to champion, connect and protect our environment.



Creative Economy & Innovation



2,041

Creatives Industries jobs
in East Suffolk (2023)



Innovation Martlesham (Adastral Park):

Home to 150+

ICT/digital companies anchoring
the creative-digital cluster



Film & Screen:

Filming contributes an estimated

£18,000

per filming day to East
Suffolk's economy



Arts, Culture & Heritage



Cultural & creative assets:

Over 300

mapped sites across East Suffolk

Heritage importance:
East Suffolk has

**more listed
buildings**

than any other district in England



Current Picture

2023/2024 – Participation once in last year (16+)

Connect



- Visited a heritage site in person 61.5% East Suffolk. England is 66.23% (inc museums/castle ruins etc).
- Engaged with arts (last 12 months) – East Suffolk – 91.05% England – 90.42%
- Creative Businesses – 6.22% East Suffolk 9.30% England (VAT registered)
- 52.2% East Suffolk population visited the cinema (compared to 54.7% nationally)
- 36.9 % attended live music in East Suffolk compared with 39% England

National: Decline in reading for pleasure, only 1 in 3 children in 2025. (lowest since 2005)

Generally, there was lower cultural participation for: - (Suffolk wide)

- People living in more deprived areas - People with a lower socio-economic classification
- People with a disability (excluding libraries)

Role of cultural sector in improving health & wellbeing

Further evidence about the role of the cultural sector in improving health and wellbeing comes from the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). The WHO has published a significant scoping review of over 3,000 research studies exploring the effect of the arts on health and wellbeing:

Findings showed how the arts can help:



Affect social determinants of health

- Improve social cohesion and support conflict resolution
- Foster prosocial behaviour - prosocial behaviour encompasses all actions that benefit others, e.g. feeling empathy and concern for others
- Create new networks (e.g. for refugees and asylum seekers)
- Address social inequalities and inequity
- Reduce anxiety, depression, emotional alienation, truancy and aggression for children living in areas of deprivation



Support child development

- Foster and enhance mother-infant bonding
- Speech and language development, including auditory skills and reading ability
- Improve educational attainment
- Support interpersonal relationships in the classroom, especially for children with learning disabilities
- Predict academic performance across the school years (childhood engagement in arts)



Encourage health promoting behaviours

- People lead healthier lives. Those who engage with the arts are more likely to lead healthier lives, including eating healthily and staying physically active, irrespective of their socioeconomic status and social capital
- Improve general self-perceived health
- Enjoy health promoting behaviours
- Prevent and reduce drug use in adolescents
- Help the communication of health messages



Help prevent ill-health

- Enhance subjective wellbeing
- Improve mental health
- Prevent cognitive decline
- Prevent frailty
- Improve medicine compliance, for example, storytelling interventions have been found to improve hypertension and medication adherence
- Improve diabetes management in children
- Protect against premature mortality



Supporting care giving

- Enhance understanding of the complexity of ill health among clinicians and researchers
- Improve clinical skills, personal skills and communication skills in health care professionals
- Support care givers
- The arts are also effective in reaching groups who are either less likely to engage in health care or experience more barriers to engaging
- Help military veterans engage with health issues e.g. through tele-health arts activities for those living in rural areas



Management and treatment

- Perinatal mental illness reduction
- Reduce mental distress, depression and anxiety
- Help children who have experienced trauma
- Support care for people with acute conditions e.g. in inpatient care settings
- Help to support people with neurodevelopmental and neurological disorders
- Assist with the management of noncommunicable diseases; and support end-of-life care

Objective to increase cultural participation = economic, social & health benefits

Think Tank: Music in Later Life Music has power to improve quality of life and wellbeing in later life. It encourages connection, reduces isolation and loneliness, improves mood, memory and sleep quality, reduces feelings of stress and anxiety, and helps lower the impact of conditions like depression and dementia. Whatever way we decide to engage with it, the power of music cannot be underestimated. (Britten Pears Arts)



Beach of dreams Environmental Campaign



Heritage Open Days Grants



Event Grants



Network events



FESTIVAL
OF CAREERS



What next?

Continue to work closely with creative sector, support freelancers, and liaise with stakeholders.



Support National Year of Reading 2026

CULTURE IN EAST SUFFOLK
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CULTURE FUND
IMAGINE. CREATE. INSPIRE.

Join an online information session to hear more about the criteria for East Suffolk Council's new Children and Young People's Culture Fund.

We encourage youth providers, education establishment and culture sector to attend. (VCFSE)

10am on Thursday 29th January

New: Children & Young People Culture Grant – Up to 3k

New Health & Wellbeing Culture Grant: Inc Creative Health

East Suffolk Heritage Open Days Small Grants

Support museums and heritage visitor attractions

CULTURE IN EAST SUFFOLK

Join our Culture in East Suffolk network events!

More network meetings: Next one Saxmundham

Leiston specific event to grow connections



Workshops in schools – Autumn

Link with Youth Providers: Gaming