



Ideas Test Business Plan 2017-2020

Contents:

Introduction

- What is Ideas Test?
- Strategic Priorities 2017-2020

Section 1: Drivers

- 1.1 The Place
- 1.2 Vision, Mission and Aims (The Manifesto)
- 1.3 Resources

Section 2: Delivery

- 2.1 Operational activity
 - 2.1.1 Governance
 - 2.1.2 Staff
 - 2.1.3 Finance and Income generation plan
- 2.2 The Programme
 - 2.2.1 Artistic Vision
 - 2.2.2 Diversity in Swale and Medway
 - 2.2.3 Audiences and Participants
 - 2.2.4 Activity and Events

Section 3: The Difference We Make

- 3.1 Story of Change
- 3.2 Long term impact and sustainability

Introduction

What is Ideas Test?

Ideas Test was funded by Arts Council England in 2012 from their Creative People and Places fund. This fund aims to support people to experience and be inspired by the arts, irrespective of where they live and their social, educational or financial circumstances. This is a targeted fund, aimed at parts of the country where people's involvement in the arts is significantly below the national average. Our successful bid put forward a long term vision to increase arts participation in Swale and Medway by 10% over 10 years, by supporting the growth of creativity, invention and imagination.

During Phase 1 2013-2016 we created 36,000 individual opportunities for people to take part in the arts and produced over 175 activities and events.

Strategic priorities for 2017-2020

- 1. Focus on audience segments with the greatest potential for increasing engagement**
Puts learning from Phase 1 programme to good use by targeting families, older people, young people in audience segments where evidence shows there are people with more propensity to engage than is being achieved, or where people are willing to engage regularly with the right offer.
- 2. Digital – learning, skills, creativity**
Responding to a clear lack of digital provision in the local area, and opportunity to become a beacon of excellence for provision which reaches rural as well as urban communities. We will use digital as a creative medium in its own right as well as practical applications.
- 3. Diversity – taking away barriers and celebrating difference.**
Building on our existing work supporting activity for and led by disabled people, we will take further steps including 'Creative Case' commissions to celebrate and reflect the full range of diversity of the local population.
- 4. Building Ideas Test as a sustainable organisation**
As Ideas Test establishes itself as a core part of the Kent infrastructure we need to develop strong and sustainable business and financial models, diversifying income strands and ensuring that we are not dependant on Arts Council England for survival.
- 5. High quality artistic partnerships**
To deliver our artistic ambition we need high quality, experienced arts partners to commission, produce and present challenging, Out of the Ordinary experiences for local people. We are developing long term, sustainable relationships with a number of organisations to ensure these are embedded locally, delivering over time, not just one-off pieces of activity.

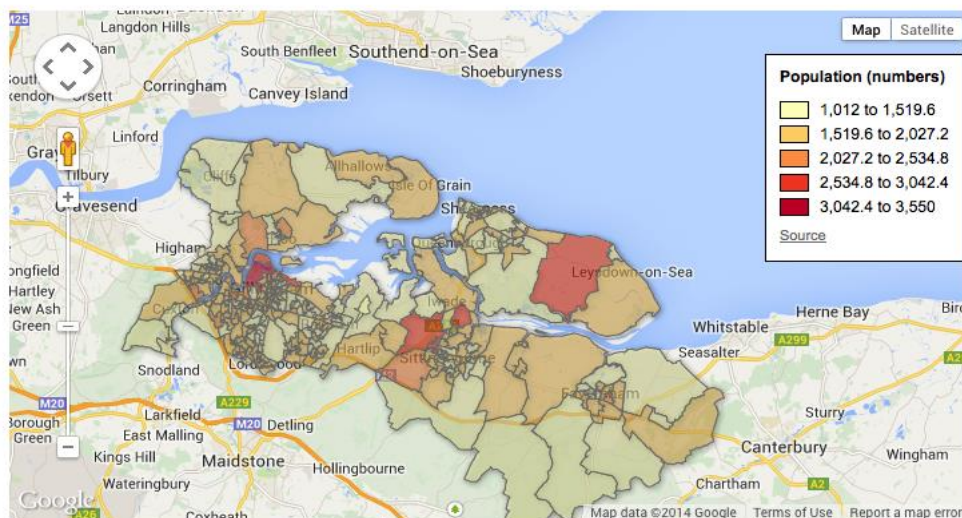
Section 1: Drivers

1.1 Swale and Medway: The Place

Swale and Medway were eligible areas for Arts Council England's Creative People and Places programme because they are in the bottom 20% for arts engagement based on the Active People Survey commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. At the time the application was made (2012) the percentage of adults that reported attending an arts event/participating in an arts activity at least three times in the previous 12 months was estimated as Swale 38.01%, and Medway 38.24%.

Rural and semi-rural with some urban areas, Swale and Medway has no single geographic focus with poor transport infrastructure outside the A2 corridor.

Swale and Medway have some of the highest levels of deprivation in Kent and some of the most deprived wards in the UK.



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

Audiences:

- 45% of Swale and Medway households have dependant children
- The population has larger numbers of 5-19 year olds and over 45 year olds than the national average.
- The over 65 population is forecast to increase by 55% between 2013 and 2033.
- 17.4% of adults self-identify as having a disability or limiting health condition. Swale has the 4th highest number of disabled adults in Kent, (above the national average).

1.2 Vision, Mission and Aims

Our 10 year vision:

Ideas Test is a propagator for creativity, supporting the conditions for the seeds of invention and imagination to grow in Swale & Medway. By working with local communities and making links between organisations and people, we are investing in their ability to inspire a greater appetite for the arts. We're getting things done together to create a sustainable future.

Working in partnership with local people we will drive research and act as a conduit through which new models and approaches for engagement with the arts can be developed and tested, through creative experiments.

The Ideas Test Manifesto

Ideas Test is an arts organisation working hand in hand with communities in Swale and Medway empowering them to live more creative lives.

Ideas Test is about offering people creative opportunities in their neighbourhood. We use arts and creativity to help people develop new skills and make their area a more attractive place to live and work.

Ideas Test is for people who would like to get more involved in the arts and want our help to do so: audiences and participants; community organisations, promoters and event organisers who want to make their local community a better place; and artists and creative professionals who want to create great work in partnership with our communities.

How we work

Ideas Test is a participatory action research project. This means that we will work in an active and reflective way with local people, looking for local solutions, and use what we learn to develop and focus our programme as well as sharing our learning freely with others. We are collaborative and responsive, working with partners to meet local need.

A key principle of our approach is to create a 'ladder of engagement' whereby people will be supported to 'follow up' one good experience with another.

Our work will be characterised by the following principles, each a thread running throughout all that we do:

- The views and aspirations of the local community are at the heart of our programme
- We will involve local people in the design, decision making and delivery of our programme, as well as in individual projects and activities.

- Inclusivity and diversity is central to all that we do. We will work to remove barriers to participation for participants and professionals and to ensure all the voices in our community are heard.
- Our strategic interventions will be informed by evidence and tailored to need.
- We encourage new models of working and practice that strengthen local infrastructure.
- We foster resilience and sustainability in all our cross-sector collaborations.
- We recognise the importance of celebrating and finding contemporary relevance in heritage.
- We promote aspiration, high artistic quality and excellence.

Aims

1. **Increase Regular Arts Participation:** We will enable more people to take part in the arts as amateurs, professionals or audience members.

Outputs:

- Attractive local provision of opportunities to take part from Ideas Test and others.
- “Next step on the ladder” opportunities
- Locally generated Small Experiments to test new methodology
- Work with schools, youth settings and directly with young people to promote creative opportunities for the next generation of arts participants and consumers.
- Out of the Ordinary projects provide artistic challenge and stretch to the existing local cultural ecology.

2. **Strengthen Community Leadership:** We will support communities to take the lead in new sustainable creative initiatives.

Outputs:

- Local people (Community Catalysts) take part in decision panels for commissioned work.
- Reflection events allow participants and partners to review activity and feed in to next steps and programme development
- Community Catalysts lead or co-devise projects.

3. **Develop local creative businesses and the professional and amateur arts sector:** We will facilitate networks, provide learning and support for the amateur and professional sector and create the right conditions for innovation, collaboration and serendipity.

Outputs:

- Support programme for artists and creative businesses – networking, training, mentoring, digital skills
- Support programme for community and voluntary organisations.
- Provision of co-working and showing space at No.34.

1.3 Resources:

People, Partners and Networks

The Ideas Test programme is overseen by a Consortium of Kent and Medway based organisations who have a range of skills and knowledge which support effective and high quality delivery. The Consortium organisations are: Swale Community and Voluntary Service, Medway Voluntary Action, Sheppey Matters, Whitstable Biennale and the Gulbenkian Theatre.

We have a small staff team led by the Director who manage different parts of our programme. The majority of our staff are from the area which gives them local knowledge as well as the specialist skills they bring to the organisation.

We have a network of [Community Catalysts](#) nominated by local people as 'doers' from the arts and other sectors. Community Catalysts help us directly on the programme by taking part in the Ideas Testing Network, decision panels and informal advice and mentoring, giving us a great range of skills and knowledge to draw on.

Our partners include the Audience Agency, Royal Opera House Bridge, University of Kent, Canterbury Christchurch University, Kent County Council, Medway Council, Swale Borough Council, and delivery partners including Sound and Music, South East Dance, Hydrocracker Theatre Company, Blast Theory and Voluntary Arts.

We offer opportunities to volunteers to work with us on many aspects of our programme and we offer paid internships and apprenticeships to bring new people into the arts in an inclusive way.

Finance

Ideas Test is funded by Arts Council England through its Creative People and Places programme with £750,000 over three years. We have a range of other core funding partners including Kent County Council, Medway Council and Swale Borough Council.

Our other income comes from a range of sources including paid for events, donations, charitable trusts, public funders and commissions.

Section 2: Delivery

2.1 Operational

2.1.1 Governance

Ideas Test is governed by a consortium of organisations who have oversight and accountability for the programme. The Consortium operates to a Memorandum of Understanding which forms part of our Governance Handbook (Appendix 2). The Handbook sets out in detail how the programme elements work together and where the various responsibilities and decision making powers rest. This includes Terms of Reference for Community Decision Panels.

The Consortium manages risk within the programme – see Appendix 7 Risk Register and Mitigation Plan.

Ideas Test is currently a project of Swale Community and Voluntary Service (SCVS), our accountable body. In 2017-2020 Ideas Test will move to independent charitable status, becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). We have a group of potential trustees ready and waiting, drawn from the consortium organisations and business

2.1.2 Staff

Role	Responsibilities	Reports to
Director f/t	Artistic and strategic lead, partnership development, research lead, accountable for programme delivery	Consortium Chair
Touring and Operational Manager 0.6	Leads on Now Showing and other performance work. Manages operation of Ideas Test including No.34	Director
Programme Co-ordinator f/t	Manages information systems, staff rotas. Data collection and returns. Finance record keeping. Leads on volunteering. Communications including stakeholder reporting.	T&O Manager
Audience Development Assistant	Communications, marketing and outreach	T&O Manager

	lead. Holds press and community liaison relationships. Leads on social media and press work.	
Arts Producer (freelance)	Research and development of community programme. Programming of No.34 and other spaces as required. Contribution to development and delivery of wider artistic programme.	Director
Arts Co-ordinator	Works with Arts Producer and independently to support and deliver the Community Programme.	Director
Creative Network Producer 0.6	Leads on capacity building, CPD and learning programme	Director
Creative Network Assistant 0.6	Supports CN programme	CN Producer
Youth Catalyst	Works directly with YP, developing and delivering programme.	CN Producer
Creative Producers (freelance)	As required by specific project strands	

2.1.3 Finance and Income Generation Plan

(i) Financial strategy

Since 2013, Ideas Test has built a strong financial strategy. We have a good track record and potential to attract partnership funding for Phase 2. We successfully bid for commissioned work and are now part of a consortium of third sector organisations exploring how we can deliver cultural activity relevant to our core purpose, within wider contexts of health, wellbeing, adult

social care and youth services. We will bring in 28% partnership funding in y1 (we achieved this level in 2015/16), 37% in y2 and 42% in y3 as we become more sustainable.

We benefit from charitable status through Swale CVS which enables us to access Trust funding. Our priority for the next three years is to retain a mixed economy, build new income streams and reduce our dependence on ACE.

Our **Budget** is built on actual costs to date, and take into account our growing potential to generate income, as well as a pragmatic approach to using our investment to deliver most effectively against targets. The budget concentrates resources in areas where our track record and research suggests we will have most impact.

We pay appropriate rates to professional arts practitioners, but also make the most of opportunities to work with volunteers to support activity and enable more people to engage with the arts in new ways.

We embed Access Costs within individual projects which enables us to be flexible across the programme as required. We have a strong commitment to inclusiveness and will ensure that all activity takes potential access costs into account.

We are focussed on Value for Money: Analysis of cost per head of activity against the legacy and long term benefits will ensure a balance of effective projects which are genuinely leading to behaviour change and increased arts engagement.

We will invest in programmes where we are confident there is potential to generate substantial partnership income, and look for commercial opportunities across all our activities through sales of work, catering etc.

Our partners will contribute in cash and kind towards shared activity.

Procurement: We will seek to use local suppliers and talent as part of our sustainable approach. We want to invest in the local economy, spreading the benefit of our activities to a wide range of local businesses inside and outside the cultural sector.

(ii) Resilience and Risk (See also Appendix 7 Risk Register & Mitigation Plan)

We assign a contingency to each project to protect against unexpected eventualities.

Reserves: As a new entity, Ideas Test had no reserves at the start of the programme. We are working to bring in additional unrestricted income to build a reserve for the future, covering at least 3 months operating costs - approx £37,000. We currently have £5,000 in reserve.

Financial controls: We have tight controls on financial risk to ensure we do not enter into commitments prematurely and incur liabilities as a result.

We monitor our finances on a weekly basis. Working with the Consortium we use rigorous management and financial controls including:

- Monthly reports and analysis of cash flow, income and expenditure.
- End of Year reports, audited by SCVS accountants and reported to the Charity Commission.
- Team lead for each project or strand is the budget holder for that area, responsible for monitoring and evaluating income and expenditure.
- The Touring and Operations Manager and Director oversee all budgets and retain an overview of the programme as a whole.
- The Director signs off all expenditure over £500.
- The Director and Consortium Chair meet regularly to review finances and ensure that any issues are quickly identified and dealt with.
- The Consortium scrutinises quarterly management accounts, as well as signing off the budget on an annual basis.

(iii) Income Generation Plan - Diversifying income streams

We have recently updated our Fundraising Strategy and Action Plan. We will retain a fundraising consultant to support capacity and act as a mentor for the team, ensuring we can take advantage of opportunities and build internal skills, making the organisation more sustainable.

We have steadily increased the amount of income generated against ACE investment in Phase 1 from 9% in y1, 13% in y2 and 29% in y3, and are confident we can continue this upward trend. A further three years stability underpinned with ACE funding through CPP gives us sufficient time to establish a sustainable financial model.

- **Trusts and foundations**

Trusts and Foundations are a key area of focus for increased income in terms of scale. Our new model of project R&D integrates research into funding sources and applications within the process. Using our Fundraising Strategy we will make targeted applications focussed on social value, artistic programme, capacity building and organisational development.

- **Individual Giving**

The characteristics of our significantly disadvantaged location make it unlikely we can generate a substantial amount from private philanthropy. However, we will solicit donations from individuals, particularly the 'first step' occasions where free entry is often key to getting people over the threshold.

We have set up online and text donation and will launch a campaign aimed at turning our audience into donors to support our work.

We are asking participants to donate towards costs at drop-in workshops. This approach, coupled with a 'Pay what you think it's worth' policy for some events, will enable us to generate income whilst not putting up a barrier to new experiences.

We will look for opportunities to increase individual support, eg through Kickstarter campaigns, which will enable us to connect our audiences and participants with activity in a direct way.

- **Business Partnerships**

We will look for opportunities to work with businesses to extend our reach and provide services. Our relationship with Spirit of Sittingbourne and the Swale business community give us a good starting point. We have received substantial cash support from U+I Ltd which we expect to continue and we are cultivating potential new local partners including COOK.

- **Earned income**

Ticket sales - we will develop our paid for offer, looking to build income. We have undertaken research into comparable events and activities and are pricing at a realistic level for the local market. No.34 gives us a venue to use for events which means we not reliant on others for box office, space hire etc.

Our **co-working membership scheme** at No.34 gives people access to the space and co-working facilities on a sliding fee scale depending on the amount of time required.

Consultancy and expertise - We have a track record of entrepreneurial activity, selling our services and expertise to others. We will actively market this intellectual property, generating fees to support our programme and core activity.

- **Higher Education Partnerships**

Relationships with University of Kent, Canterbury Christchurch University and others give us potential to access academic research funding through partners and collaborators.

- **Creative Industries funding**

There is local potential for ERDF and ESF funding around skills development and enterprise.

- **In Kind Support**

Consortium partners contribute significant in-kind resources and capacity to the Ideas Test programme. They contribute annual in kind support through staff time, free room use, free tickets for events and professional advice amounting to almost £18,000 per year.

Swale Borough Council are supporting us through our tenancy at No.34 Sittingbourne High Street, at a level £7,000 below the market rent.

Our delivery partners are co-investing time and resources in all shared projects.

Whitstable Biennale will co-commission work with Ideas Test in 2017 and 2019, committing financial and in-kind resources to these projects, and bringing their networks and expertise to help us lever more cash partnerships.

Sound and Music will support us to bring an extended programme of new music and sound art to the area. They will make activity available to us at a reduced fee, and we will work together to generate income.

2.2 Programme 2017-2020

2.2.1 Artistic Vision

At the core of our curatorial approach is the belief that our programme must allow for research and development, creative risk taking and deep reflection in order for our work to continue to grow and evolve.

Working closely with artistic and curatorial advisors, our starting point is identifying artists who connect deeply with audiences. The work we champion is about interaction, dialogue and engagement with people. In 2017-2020 we will address these themes in new ways, taking our work into new places, new platforms and new partnerships to create intelligent, critical and reflective experiences.

The key to our artistic plans is creativity, innovation and flexibility. Our participatory action learning model means we constantly challenge and reflect on our work, leading to change and evolution of the programme. Our network of partners and collaborators will support and enable this work.

We aspire to the highest possible artistic quality in our work, this is how we achieve the best outcomes for our audiences. This is visible in the artists and companies we have brought to the area - Blast Theory, Hydrocracker, Urban Playground, Ruth Ewan, Mikhail Karikis - and excellent work from locally based practitioners - Trish Scott, Tania Holland Williams, Robert Jarvis.

We build sustainable relationships with artists and companies, rather than simply taking an opportunistic approach, or grabbing every interesting offer. It is critical for us that practitioners who come to Swale and Medway are

genuinely interested in being in this place and working with its people, and that their work is appropriate and responsive to local context.

We will:

- * Take risks to explore new forms of practice: mixing playful and appealing forms with probing social and political questions. We may develop new kinds of work - art that doesn't look like art. We will build on our activities in digital and creative media to create new possibilities for artistic practice.
- * Play with scale, offering experiences for the few and the many: successful impact will be demonstrated by the richness, depth and quality of interventions.
- * Work in dialogue with our audiences and communities: they will shape our projects through testing and feedback and their voices will be present in the work that is made. Involving local people in the development, production and delivery of interactive projects reflects our Creative Case approach to diversity.
- * Support work that explores deeply the hopes and desires of people whose voices are not often heard, placing them at centre stage. These dialogues will then ripple outwards through media & social media, writing, research papers and interviews.
- * Work with artists based locally, regionally, nationally and internationally supporting professional development opportunities, building networks and creating opportunities for exhibition and the creation of ambitious new work at different scales.
- * Continue to support new and emerging artists with diverse voices as well as working with more established practitioners and companies.
- * Work with new partners around shared interests, eg. Sound and Music, who are interested in our local experience commissioning and programming contemporary music and sound art. Our research into audiences and motivation will inform their national work in audience development.
- * Embed research into our practice and disseminate that research widely collaborating with researchers from different disciplines.

Engage with our peers to share knowledge and challenge each other to improve and develop: We will provide leadership to the cultural sector in interaction and participation, and the development of an inclusive approach.

2.2.2 Diversity in Swale and Medway (see also Equality Action Plan)

Our approach to diversity and inclusion is neatly summed up by Jude Kelly, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, at the launch of the new White

Paper when she said: "Inclusion doesn't mean 'I'm standing in the middle, come join me' – you have to stand in a different place."

The population of Swale & Medway is 93.7% white. There are a significant number of people from the Roma community. There is a high level of concern locally about European economic migration, although little reliable data. There are permanently located Eastern European communities and seasonal agricultural workers.

The proportion of disabled people is higher than the national average, and second highest in Kent. A very high proportion of those people have mental health problems, and we know from our own direct experience in working with Public Health that there are huge problems affecting young people in the area. Barriers also disproportionately affect older people, younger people, and families who have disabled members, all of whom fall within our target audience. Social, economic and educational disadvantage are high, and this multiplies other disadvantages, making people subject to multiple barriers in their lives.

The overriding compelling issue is isolation and loneliness. For older people this may be because of mobility difficulties or lack of public transport. For families it can be lack of confidence to take part in events or even go into town with family members whose access needs may not be met. For young people it can be a sense of difference and lack of confidence to operate outside a very narrowly defined personal and geographic territory, or a strong feeling that the only potential for the future involves moving away.

We take a Creative Case approach in developing an appropriate response to inclusion. This is based on the real lived experience of the people we are working with, and our knowledge - received directly from them - of what barriers they do and do not experience. We will work with artists with diverse voices to create new work responding to the locality, engaging with local communities in its creation.

By addressing these barriers we can make it easier for those people - and many others - to feel they can take part in arts and cultural activity, whether that is as creators themselves or as consumers. We want to see and hear these people in our community.

We will:

- * Work to create new volunteering opportunities for disabled people in organisations and venues: to help create a familiarity and welcome for visitors, and help organisations to become more inclusive, making permanent changes to how they operate.
- * Work with existing contacts and allies: including artists Chris Sacre and Lucky Moyo, voluntary groups like River Voice Community Choir (visually impaired) and specialist organisations like Kent Autistic Association to develop

opportunities which make it simple and easy for people to get involved with the arts.

- * Train reviewers who will critique arts events from their own perspective: making the most of digital opportunities to reach out to people in their own environments, but always in a way which encourages connection and dialogue, whether face to face or through social media.

- * Privilege the voices of people who are often not heard directly: by doing things with, and enabling, rather than speaking on their behalf and doing to.

- * Create opportunities for learning disabled people: there is little locally which offers learning disabled people the opportunity to be the creators and authors of activity rather than simply the recipients of it. We will work with ground-breaking projects like Sprung Digi and Outside In to increase creative opportunities for learning disabled people.

Create an integrated and inclusive offer not one that separates and stigmatises. All commission opportunities will be promoted and open to artists from any background and we will accommodate access needs as required.

We are developing our Equalities Action Plan 2017-20 which will be complete by the end of March 2017.

2.2.3 Audiences and Participants (See also Audience Development Plan)

Ideas Test set out to increase the amount of regular engagement with the arts by reaching out to occasional or low arts engagers in Swale & Medway using a grassroots-up approach based on creating community networks, building trust and removing barriers. Our 2016 Research Report demonstrates this approach is effective in attracting local audiences with 85% of low engagers seeking out further arts opportunities subsequently.

The 5 largest Audience Spectrum segments in Swale and Medway amount to 87% of the total population and are all low or occasional engagers. Based on the Active People baseline it appears that there is also less actual engagement than one might expect based on propensity.

In response to our audience profiling in 2015 Ideas Test has focused on three demographic groups; older people, young people 14-25 and families with children. These populations are projected to grow substantially locally over the next 10 years.

The demographic targeting gives us a clear focus for marketing and audience development with specific offers for particular groups, or by tailored marketing to attract an intergenerational group to the same event.

For more detail see Appendix 5 Audience Development Plan.

Communities will continue to lead and be central to our work: (See also Appendix 3 How Will Communities Take the Lead?)

- * We will involve and work closely with the local community as we develop and deliver the programme. The Community Catalyst network will be the foundation on which we draw for advice, decision making and critique at both a project and programme level with regular Ideas Testing Network events to review and plan.
- * In some locations we will work with specific groups who have come together around ideas. In other places there are legacy groups from previous projects to build on.
- * We will work directly with specific communities of interest where appropriate - for example research into Eastern European music making traditions.
- * We recognise the importance of many voices at a programme level, if it is to serve the whole community, but would equally champion the specific at a more granular level to ensure individual projects meet local needs.
- * We will develop capacity in the local community to continue activity themselves, seeding skills and confidence to programme and promote work, run voluntary or amateur groups effectively and lead their own projects.

2.2.4 Activity and Events (See also Year 1 Action Plan)

The programme divides into two elements - the Community Programme which offers regular opportunities for repeat engagement and Out of the Ordinary - large scale, ambitious projects which deliver outstanding artistic work co-created collaboratively with communities.

(i) Out of the Ordinary

- **Visual Arts Co-commissions with Whitstable Biennale**

Whitstable Biennale has a national reputation for working with the best emerging talent in UK visual arts. Building on the success of Mikahail Karikis' work in Grain we will co-commission major works in new locations with Whitstable Biennale in 2017 and 2019, with work being re-presented in the Biennale in 2018 and 2020. We will choose locations where we have not previously made major investments to offer opportunities to new people. R&D will start immediately after each Biennale, allowing artists maximum time to build relationships with local people and co-create work.

- **Playing to a Different Tune**

We will develop a new strand of music activity bringing together professional and amateur arts activity, creating new opportunities, commissioning new work, increasing ambition and professional skills and bringing in national and international practitioners and researchers.

We know there is strong local interest in music and performance, and a strong grassroots folk community as well as a vibrant local music scene in Medway.

We will research and deliver a large scale strategic intervention which will bring together composers, performers, musical instrument makers and audiences with dancers and local history and heritage enthusiasts in a way which celebrates what already exists, extends and challenges creative practitioners and builds new opportunities for people to participate and enjoy creative activity with many entry points.

Playing to a Different Tune will start with small scale research activities in 2017, bringing together local groups with new partners and music professionals to generate ideas and opportunities. We will root our investigation in local folk traditions, branching out into musical instrument making, new and traditional music and folk dance including partnering in research into music making traditions in the local Roma and Eastern European communities.

2018 will bring larger scale events - integrated into the local festival ecology or linked to key celebratory or historic events. These will include:

- * A museums/heritage festival using photographic collections and material culture to map the history of music making locally.
- * An embedded composer commissioned to make new work in collaboration with local choirs.
- * Showcasing of Kent-based musical instrument makers.
- * Amateur and voluntary groups will be supported to gain new artistic skills and ambition by working alongside professionals, and to recruit new members through community workshops and drop in sessions.
- * Digital technology will enable new kinds of interactive music making and experiences.

We will further develop this in 2019.

Our partners include Sound and Music, University of Kent Music Department, Dynamics, Kent Music, Kent Museums Association and local folk dance and folk music organisations.

- **Island to Island**

We will create an exciting large scale opportunity for young people, Island to Island, linking young people on the Isle of Grain and the Isle of Sheppey through the creation of a virtual bridge on the site of the former ferry. We are talking to Blast Theory and others about how this might take shape and provide a way to express the views and experiences of young people in these

rural locations. We will work with Sheppey Bridge Radio and Community Catalyst, radio presenter and artist Daniel Nash.

(ii) Community Programme

Within the Community Programme we will continue to test and generate innovative ideas. We will focus where we know there is potential to scale, reproduce or develop further iterations of the work produced.

We will grow the network of Community Catalysts by engaging with more young people, elders and those with families nominated through our programmes. We will invest in their skills and development as creative and cultural leaders in their communities, enabling them to initiate new arts projects embedded in the locality.

We will offer activity at No.34 in Sittingbourne and at partner venues in Medway and Swale.

- **Family Arts**

Our innovative work for families will include early years dance, family workshops and performances in a children's centre. We will support family friendly work during the Family Arts Festival and take advantage of opportunities through initiatives like Fun Palaces to develop new science and art events, taking advantage of crossover audiences.

- **Impact 14-25 years**

Our young people's strand will offer opportunities for young people 14-25 to develop and deliver their own projects with our support, to programme and promote new work in non-traditional venues, and to gain skills and confidence in themselves as creative producers in their own right. We will support emerging creative practitioners through Creative Job Club, and offer Arts Award integrated into our offer as an optional qualification.

- **Third Age Creatives**

We will offer regular activities for older people working with partners including the Swale Seniors Forum. We will integrate the offer with volunteer transport and social networks. Participants will programme and co-create the offer. A pilot programme in 2017 will form the basis for a longer term offer of engaging activities and events.

- **Now Showing**

Our network of volunteer promoters and non-traditional venues will enable us to take high quality work out into the local area, making new kinds of experiences accessible to growing rural audiences. We will work with

University of Kent and emerging practitioners to commission and tour new work in music, theatre and dance at this scale to the benefit of both artists and audiences. We will explore the use of digital tools and live streaming to extend the reach of artistic work, including interactive opportunities to engage directly with live performance.

- **Ideas Test @ No.34**

No.34 in Sittingbourne, the hub town in the heart of rural Swale will offer a venue for small scale performance, workshops, exhibitions and capacity building and training events. Knit and natter will take place alongside experimental artists' film and video making it easy for people to try new things and access innovative and challenging work. Located on the High Street, passing footfall is high. The opportunity to attract local people into the space on a spontaneous basis gives us a new first contact point from which to offer further opportunities for arts engagement and to showcase work which is happening elsewhere.

- **The Creative Network**

A responsive programme for creative practitioners and members of the wider community enabling them to extend their reach, make new connections and develop sustainable business models.

Our digital learning programme offers workshops in skills like podcasting, animation, music technology and coding, tailored to a variety of ages and skill levels.

We will offer regular blocks of activity in areas where we know there is demand – eg Project 101, for people who want to start or improve their ability to run successful projects, and Creative Job Club for aspiring young creative professionals.

Along side this we will develop innovative activity including Collective Crunch, an intensive programme for mid career artists from all artforms, during which they will meet with outstanding practitioners across arts and other disciplines, to work creatively and learn together. This programme will drive up quality and ambition, and help boost the careers of artists at a tricky stage where many lose out on opportunities and find it difficult to break new ground.

Section 3: The Difference We Will Make:

The logic model connecting the context in which the Ideas Test programme is delivered with outputs and outcomes is shown in the Story of Change diagram on the following page. How we will evidence and measure change is detailed in full in Appendix 6 Research and Evaluation Plan.

The Long Term Vision - Sustainability

By year four we expect to have moved Swale and Medway out of the bottom 20% for arts engagement. New distribution networks will be self sustaining and there will be an increased high quality arts offer from local organisations. Our model will shift, focusing on generating outstanding cultural experiences and providing infrastructure for the sector locally, working on commissioned programmes for families, young people and older people.

- By March 2020 Swale and Medway will no-longer be in the lowest 20% for arts engagement.
- A sustainable new infrastructure of non-traditional venues programmed by volunteer promoters will be bringing high quality arts work to every part of the local area.
- A virtual, social infrastructure of Community Catalysts will be an entry point for new artistic work across Swale and Medway.
- There will be a sustainable arts offer from locally based artists and companies responding to and meeting demand from local people.
- Outstanding artists and arts companies from around the UK will want to work in Swale and Medway in an embedded way with local communities.
- Ideas Test will be part of the local cultural infrastructure catalysing activity and supporting innovative artistic practice.

Ideas Test – Story of Change

Barriers			
Lack of transport, mobility issues No-one to go with (social isolation) Cost (especially re initial risk involved in taking part in a new activity).			
Context →	Motivators →	Ideas Test Programme →	Short term outcomes →
Large and growing population of older people	Doing something new	Participatory opportunities	People seek out new arts experiences
Large and increasing population of families and young people	Taking part locally, in the community Social connectivity	Creative Network	People actively involved in shaping arts provision
Social isolation especially for older people, young families	Take part with family or friends	Family Arts, Third Age Creatives, Impact programmes	Amateur and voluntary groups are thriving
Less engagement with the arts than audience segmentation analysis would suggest would be the case.	Connection to existing interests	Museums/heritage focus Digital learning #Squad34 YP-led projects	More people take part in arts activity on a regular basis
Limited local arts offer in terms of range and quality	Increased ability to engage audiences	Creative Network Programme No.34 as a new venue Community Catalyst network	Creative practitioners have opportunities to develop their skills
Lack of infrastructure and venues, especially in Swale	Make a living from artistic practice - sustainable business models		Volunteering and intern placements support local delivery
Enablers Link with a 'trusted other' – a known person, friend, family member, Community Catalysts Local activity (easy to attend) Convenient timing Transport provision			
Artists	Local People		

Appendices:

1. Budget
2. Governance Handbook
3. How will Communities take the lead?
4. Equalities Action Plan
5. Audience Development Plan
6. Research and Evaluation Plan
7. Risk Register and Mitigation Plan