

# Appendix 1. Benchmark Examples given during the Cultural Enquiry

## Talent Inspirations

### Blackburn Festival of Making

Part of the Festival of Making, Art in manufacturing Art in Manufacturing pairs artists and makers with manufacturers and domestic artisans; giving artists access to specialist machinery and heritage craft techniques to create work together that now appears across Blackburn.

The work and companies involved are hugely diverse and ranged this year from repurposing a wallpaper machine into a sculpture to recreating a 1980s living room as a celebration of British Asian Culture.

***Lesson for BCP: The success of the project leaves a legacy of artworks across the town as well as raising awareness of local businesses and building innovative new partnerships***

### MIL Lisbon

An annual event which combines live performance by new artists, with talks and events on the creative economy with a particular focus on new international markets.

Run by a committed young team the event is partnered with five other music conventions to launch JUMP, the European Music Market Accelerator. Co-funded by the European Commission, this provides a framework for music professionals to develop innovative business models. It aims to help the music sector adapt to recent transformations of the market while encouraging it to work on a transnational level. For nine months, 10 to 20 participants from all over Europe will have the opportunity to develop their ideas and to benefit in parallel from extensive training and tutorship.

***Lesson for BCP:*** What makes MIL so successful is that it connects internationally while also supporting local people to develop their careers.

### Tesbeds, Luton

Testbeds, funded by Arts Council England, run by University of Bedfordshire and partners is an innovative scheme which offers incubation to starting artists, a 12 month collaborative research laboratory for mid-career artists, an elevator programme to help take organisations to a new level of impact and a flexible programme of events to develop enterprise skills.

In 12 months it has boosted successful arts council applications, increased participation in events and greatly improved perceptions among artists of Luton as a place to be based.

***Lesson for BCP: A sustainable university-ed scheme that is actively helping to create a welcoming and nurturing environment for creative practitioners.***

### Metal, Southend

Metal, a cultural development company with a base in Southend, shared with us how it has developed the Alt Art School. This gives local young people a practical guide to careers in the creative

industries, talking them through the opportunities that exist in local businesses and organisations. From opportunities to learn from local crafts people through to apprenticeships at established cultural organisations the guide demystifies the sector and is aimed as much at parents and schools as young people. Metal also run Alt Art School Events and training sessions.

What makes Alt Art School successful is that it pulls together a wide range of local voices and opportunities into one place in a sector that can feel very fragmented and hard to understand.

***Lesson for BCP: Working with the grass roots and communities as full partners, can bring about greater ownership and engagement.***

## Infrastructure Inspirations

### Second floor Studios Southeast England

This community Interest company develops studios in locations above shops and other unusual locations. In Sevenoaks (shown here) council invited it to open in a council owned building. It now has 18 artists studios and hosts many events open to the public such as an art market in November.

The success of the model (and there are many similar across UK) is that it utilises space which would otherwise become residential while bringing life and diversity to the high street while providing much needed affordable space for artists

***Lesson for BCP: Models like this are vital in BC which lacks traditional post-industrial spaces and could play a part in the reimagining of the high street.***

### The Powerhouse (Poole)

A community-led groups seeking to develop a new hub on derelict land. The plans are still in development but it would provide a facility for Hamworthy (and Poole) including potentially a gallery, café, music and rehearsal spaces. Their recent survey of 97 local artists and creative professional showed support for a regionally significant gallery, workshop and studio space. The group are in discussion with property developers and housing associations. While they try and secure the land they will develop a programme of community focussed activity.

***Lesson for BCP: Working with community groups to deliver in areas currently lacking cultural infrastructure will be vital.***

### St Helen's Libraries (St Helens)

The UK's most significant 'arts in libraries' project, now an Arts Council England NPO which enlivens St. Helens' network of 13 Libraries with performances, plays, gigs, workshops, courses, exhibitions and great art events funded by the National Lottery and distributed through Arts Council England. Recently crowned best arts project at The National Lottery Awards2016.

Activities range from a music tech hub every week for young people wanting to learn about digital music, through to *Northern Powerhouse: Last Towns Standing* a new online text adventure game created by Re-Dock, with young people from across the North. The Northern Powerhouse touring exhibition explores the future by showcasing imaginative and innovative objects - artefakes - featured in the game bringing the online world of 2065 into the physical.

***Lesson for BCP: Opportunity to build on the excellent work already underway across BCP's libraries into a larger programme that gains national significance.***

## **BOM Birmingham**

BOM is a centre for art, technology and science dedicated to creative innovation with purpose.

Located in central Birmingham, the gallery is free to enter and presents cutting edge digital artworks and exhibitions that spark debate about technology and scientific progress while the café provides revenue and meeting space. BOM is dedicated to positive social impact. Its exhibitions and events explore topical issues in digital culture and science which impact on human lives. BOM also offers fellowships and a residency programme.

BOM Success is to build on Hacker culture and draw connections across sectors and between formal and informal learning

***Lesson for BCP: The kind of third space that BOM offers provides active encouragement and support for collaboration and wider engagement.***

## **Fusebox (Brighton)**

The FuseBox is a hub in Brighton for digital innovators, tech visionaries and creative technologists. It is run by and is home to independent membership organisation Wired Sussex

It provides innovators with access to spaces, facilities, opportunities and expertise. It currently house the Brighton Immersive Lab and a 5G testbed.

Wired Sussex helped power Brighton's success as a creative-tech cluster through its job boards. The Fusebox brings together

research, start-ups, investors and innovators in a way that touches the whole creative economy

***Lesson for BCP: The Fusebox helped put Brighton the map as a centre for innovation, encouraging firms to relocate and invest.***

## **The Folkestone Triennial**

The Folkestone triennial sees new artworks commissioned every three years, many of which remain around the town building an outdoor gallery of leading contemporary artwork. It is a key part of the physical renewal of the seaside town, that has also focussed on independent stores, food and drink.

The project is funded largely by Creative Folkestone which is also behind the Quarterhouse and Creative Quarter

The success of the Triennial is that its opens and accessible nature, it not only puts the town on the cultural map every three years, but ensures people come every year. Residents also benefit hugely from the socially engaged work.

***Lesson for BCP: the triennial is a great example of how focussing on quality and legacy alongside an exciting festival programme can deliver long-term benefits.***

# Quality of Place Inspiration

## Cultural planning and Hull 2017

Franco Bianchini, from the University of Hull, talked about the importance of a cultural planning process which engages the community, is critical, questioning and not afraid of being controversial. He emphasised that the success of Hull 2017 lies in the twin outputs of sustaining cultural participation and strengthening the appeal of the city as an international cultural tourism destination

Cultural planning is vital in shaping successful creative places – it relies on local knowledge, working across sectors, defining and mapping local cultural assets, as well as understanding the local ‘image bank’ ( which ranges from media coverage through to local stereotypes and ‘conventional wisdom.

***Lesson for BCP: Changing perception is not easy and requires risk taking, but must build up from the grassroots***

## Place Attractiveness Oulu, Finland

Olli Rantala, from the city of Oulu Government, shared the visionary approach of Oulu, a medium sized city in Finland, that has adopted an holistic approach to place attractiveness which is successfully attracting young people to stay, shaping a more liveable and dynamic city that celebrates its quirks (‘the world air guitar championships’) and places high value on design of even the most humble street furniture.

Oulu’s approach is fascinating because it could be any non major city in Europe facing the challenges that lack of scale and prominence bring. It’s approach is refreshing because it takes

things we often ignore – like fun and attractiveness – and places them in the centre of its strategy.

***Lesson for BCP: The ‘small’ stuff matters along with the large projects when it comes to making***

## Plymouth Culture

Dom Jinks shared with the enquiry the inspiring story of Plymouth Culture. Through focussing on four linked themes – Nurturing talent, Community engagement, major projects and international projects – Plymouth has been on a journey which is starting to change the way it is seen internally and externally. The erection of Messenger – the UK’s largest statue of a woman – in 2019 received huge publicity and showed a town with a new sense of confidence. The success of Plymouth has been in bringing together often divergent voices to create a unified approach behind a strategic approach to cultural development that connects community engagement with international profile raising.

***Lesson for BCP: Focussing on both local activity and headline grabbing initiatives can deliver real change.***

## Building Connectivity (Aveiro/Guimaraes)

Carlos Martins shared how the innovative approach adopted in Northern Portugal has seen a once declining former industrial area reposition itself through culture and creativity as a growing economy. The approach focussed on Hardware (Business incubation, art creation spaces) and Software (Showcasing, international events, cultural tourism). In Guimaraes The City of Culture bid which came at a time of recession, was transformative and embraced to the extent that the town changed its logo to the symbol of the year.

The success of Northern Portugal shows how closely linking culture with economic and social renewal through a large scale and long-term programme can deliver lasting change.

***Lesson for BCP: Integrating culture into wider regeneration and economic planning is key to transformation.***

### **BCP Future Parks Accelerator**

Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund & National Trust, the Future Parks Accelerator (FPA) will see parks becoming “the backdrop for stimulating sustainable growth, improving health and wellbeing, biodiversity, reconnecting people with nature and are a driving force in bringing diverse communities together in positive activity.” The FPA will result in a green infrastructure strategy and business plan to create a sustainable model for 21st century parks. This will create a model for the UK’s parks services that can be replicated across other local authorities, especially merging authorities.

***Lesson for BCP: the opportunity to ensure that culture is a key part of the sustainable future for our open spaces.***