

CORE OFFER BUDGET FOR HERITAGE AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

WHY DOES THE COUNCIL HAVE TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE AND WHAT DOES IT NEED TO COVER?

Since 2012 the council and One Darlington have supported Creative Darlington's vision that *'looking forward to 2020 and beyond: Darlington will be a place where art happens, where the arts matter and where the arts and creativity are central to Darlington's future identity and economic successes.*

Since 2012 Creative Darlington focused on managing the transition of arts activity, supporting the sustainable development of cultural assets, developing finance for arts activity in Darlington and audience development.

The transition work currently includes managing the Bridge Arts Provision budget for repairs and maintenance of and supplies and services to a building which houses visual arts activities and supporting the development of an independent Bridge Centre for Visual Arts organisation (currently seeking charitable status) which proposes to independently operate the building, subject to negotiation with the Council. Creative Darlington also programmes exhibitions in the Crown Street Art Gallery space in Crown Street Library (83,533 visits recorded and 35 exhibitions staged May 2012 – May 2016) and at Darlington Town Hall and manages access to the Borough Art collection.

It supported the Civic Theatre and Theatre Hullabaloo in securing capital funding of £6,500,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England to restore the Civic and construct Theatre Hullaballoon, Darlington for Culture in introducing new activity including an annual Darlington Arts Festival, developing their website and a membership offer. It introduced a developing finance for arts activity in Darlington scheme with successful applicants securing approximately £3 finance from other sources from every £1 of the council's strategic arts budget allocated. Award winning and popular cultural activity that has grown in Darlington since 2012 with support from Creative Darlington includes the Jabberwocky Market programme (Journal Culture Award, Best Event Tees Valley) and the Festival of Thrift (Observer Ethical Award – Arts and Culture 2014, 27,000 visits in 2013, 45,000 in 2015). Creative Darlington's vision is underpinned by the principle that the arts belong to and should be available to everyone. Current programmes supported by Creative Darlington addressing this principle include the Blue Cabin led Heads, Hearts and Hands programme which will encourage engagement between those using our family placement services and key cultural service providers and IncludFEST, a free outdoor arts festival for children and young people, especially those with disabilities or additional needs. The vision recognises the importance of artistic excellence, being the best of which we're capable. Creative Darlington has supported the Durham Music Service led work to bring the Hallé Orchestra engage with schools in Darlington and deliver concerts at the Dolphin Centre on 23 June 2016.

The Creative Darlington board intends to go forward with increased focus on particular cultural priorities for Darlington and appears likely to extend its remit beyond the arts to include arts and heritage. It is aware of the Council's budget proposal to remove the strategic arts budget and proposal to introduce a Culture Fund with two priorities –

1. Ensuring Darlington secures significant place promotion, economic and social benefits from 2025, as both the bi-centenary of the 1825 railway passenger journey on Locomotion No. 1 and as part of the Tees Valley's bid to be UK City of Culture, subject to successful application.
2. Supporting the transition of Darlington's theatre offer while capital programmes to restore the Civic Theatre and construct Theatre Hullaballoon are underway and promoting a programme of audience development which will enhance intelligence around theatre audiences in Darlington and support the sustainable operation of key organisations and assets going forward.

HOW DOES THE CORE OFFER BUDGET MEET THE COUNCIL'S OBLIGATIONS?

The core budget will provide capacity to deliver against the strategic priorities above (2025 and theatre transition) within the Council and compliment the advisory and influencing role which the Creative Darlington board is expected to undertake going forward. The Creative Darlington board is expected to continue to encourage partnership working and enable engagement between the Council and other strategically important partners, including Darlington for Culture, Theatre Hullabaloo, Arts Council England and Teesside University.

DOES THIS DIFFER FROM THE CURRENT SERVICE?

Creative Darlington has previously managed budgets for the strategic development of arts, maximising arts activities, developing finance for arts activity, developing audiences, for services to support management of the Borough Art Collection, the Bridge Arts Provision, visual arts and for the OpenArt Studio – education and outreach programme.

In 2016/17 the proposed strategic arts budget will support Creative Darlington work around audience development, supporting key arts organisations and developing finance for arts activity and some on-going transition work from April to September 2016, including the on-going operation of the Bridge Centre for Visual Arts, with the current proposal being to significantly reduce the budget allocated to the Bridge Centre for Visual Arts from October 2016 to March 2017 based on the projected cost of closing and keeping the Bridge secure during this period.

WHAT IS THE CORE BUDGET MADE UP OF?

2019/20 budget £103,154

	Budget 2019/20 £
Employee	53,000
Supplies & Services	47,000
Overheads	3,154
Total	103,154