counterculture

"WE CREATE HERTSMERE"

HERTSMERE CREATIVE STRATEGY

SUMMARY

COUNTERCULTURE PARTNERSHIP LLP

29TH NOVEMBER 2023

CONTENTS

1. Introduction 3

2. Scope and Methodology 5

3. Stakeholder Engagement 8
   - Stakeholder Analysis 9
   - Key Themes From Stakeholder Engagement 10

4. Cultural Sector In Numbers 12

5. Audiences 17
   - Audience Profiles 18
   - Key Challenges 19
   - Arts Attendance 21

6. Wider Socio-Economic Context 22

7. Vision 24

8. The Need 26

9. The Opportunity 28

10. Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 30
   - A New Hope 31
   - Capacity 32
   - Insight 34
   - Inclusivity 35
   - Business and Investment 36
   - Quality Of Life 37
   - Young People and Talent Pipeline 38

11. Delivery Plan 39

PHOTO
Elstree & Borehamwood Sign by Peter O'Connor
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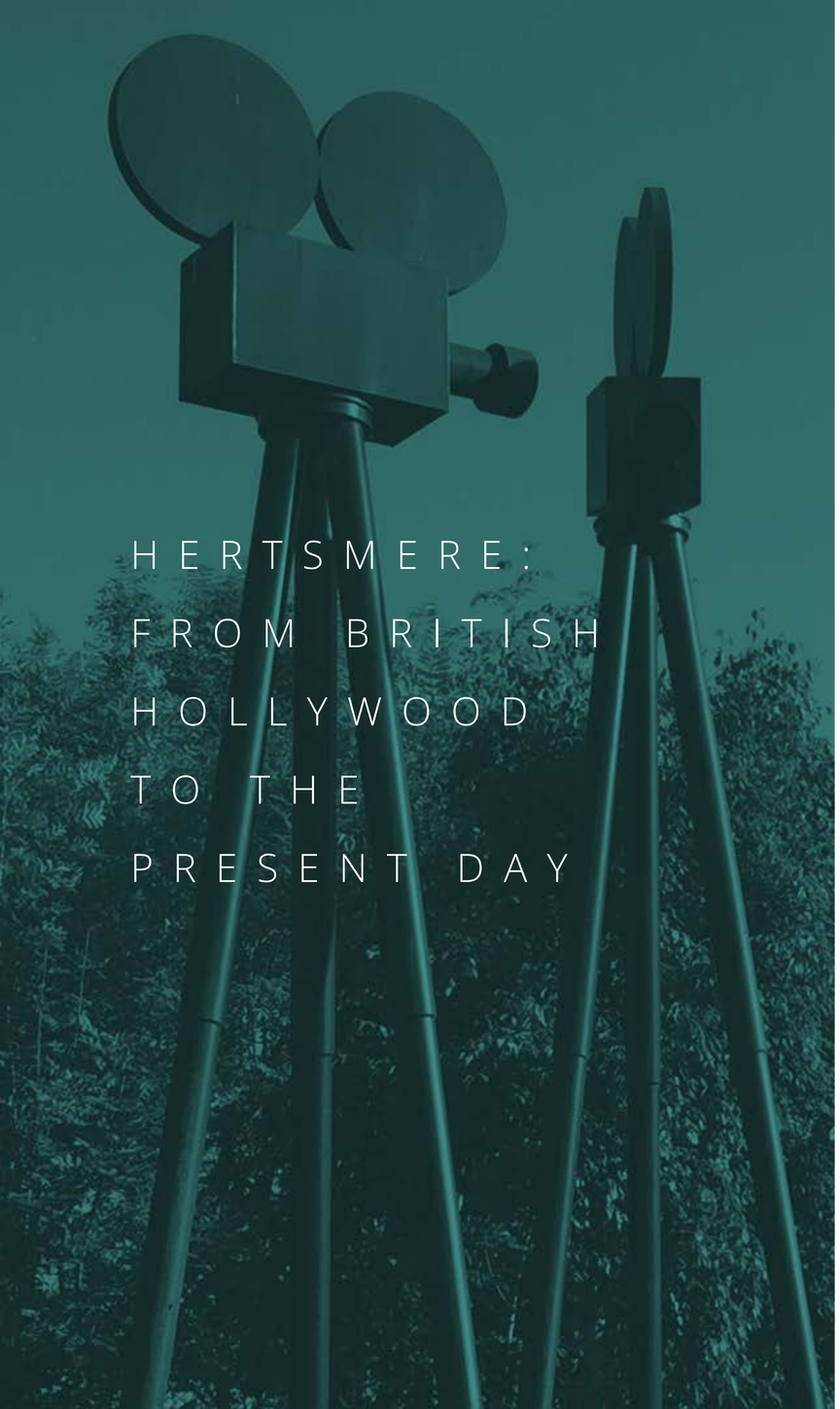
1. INTRODUCTION



HERTSMERE: FROM BRITISH HOLLYWOOD TO THE PRESENT DAY

Hertsmere is a wonderful place to live. Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett, Aldenham, Shenley and all the conurbations in between are verdant, lively and just great places to work, play, and bring up a family.

Hertsmere is both a place in its own right and a geographical expression for a group of places each with their own distinct identity. Hertsmere is defiantly not London but its proximity to it impacts the people who live, work and enjoy culture here.

From Madame Pompadour to Dancing on Ice, film and television is the primary creative industry in Hertsmere. Elstree Studio is undoubtedly a leading creative asset for the whole of the Borough.

Hertsmere does not have an enormous tourist offer but it has an enormously engaged local community. There is a hardcore of people that run community groups, volunteer and keep the heart of Hertsmere's cultural life beating. Their talents should be nurtured and their commitment cherished.

The future for Hertsmere is about culture as a force to make the Borough an even better place to live while fostering and celebrating the commitment of its residents.

PHOTO:
Tall Cameras, Borhamwood by Matt Brown
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2. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

CULTURE

Culture means many things to many people and is often used to refer to food, religion and other forms of heritage... we use it to mean all those areas of activity associated with the artforms and organisations in which Arts Council England invests: collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts.

Arts Council England (2020) Let's Create

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Creative Industries are those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.

DCMS (2020) Sectors Economic Estimates

CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Cultural Industries are those industries with a cultural object at the centre of the industry.

DCMS (2020) Sectors Economic Estimates

HERITAGE

Heritage refers to all inherited resources which people value for reasons beyond mere utility.

English Heritage (2008) Conservation Principles

Counterculture undertook research and consultation for this strategy between February and September 2023. Our approach is set out as follows:

- A desk based review of existing policies including Hertsmere's Economic Development Strategy, Corporate Plan, Community Strategy and Local Plan, along with relevant County-wide strategies.
- A review of online materials
- An asset mapping exercise of the current cultural assets within the Borough
- An economic analysis of the size of the Borough's creative and cultural economy
- A labour force analysis of those working in the district
- An audience analysis of people visiting cultural assets
- A series of stakeholder interviews, with both individuals and focus groups
- A public survey and young people's survey, in order to gain a broad insight into the views and needs of Hertsmere's residents

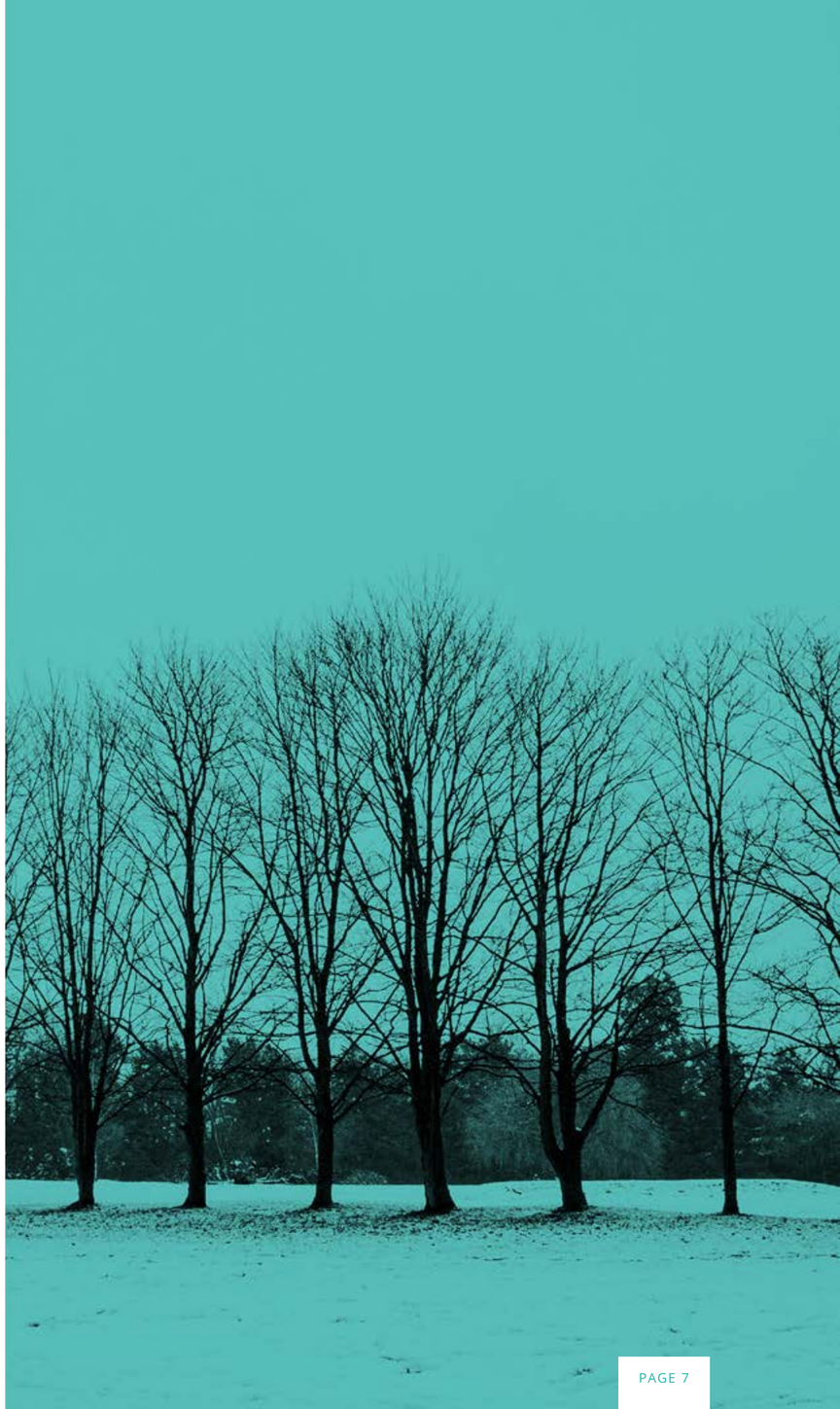
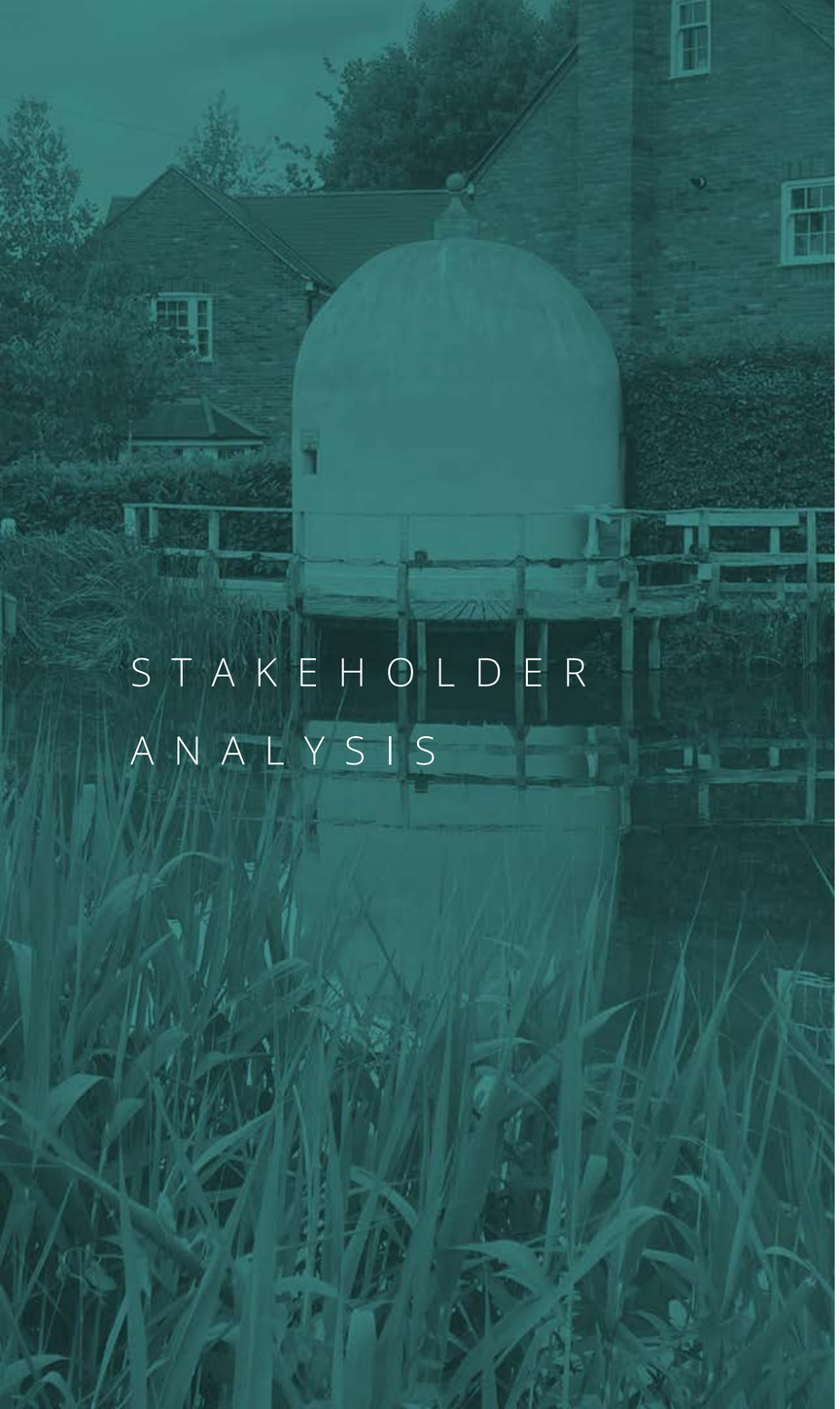


PHOTO:
Snow Trees, Bushey by Pauline Bernfeld
Unsplash

3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

- Consultants Counterculture worked closely with Hertsmere Borough Council in drawing up a broad selection of consultees. Sectors we consulted with include film and TV, heritage and leisure, theatres, tourism, council officers and councillors, Town and Parish councils, education and skills development, health, business representatives, community leaders and the youth council.

- Over 50 individuals from various organisations have contributed to twelve 1-1 interviews and six focus groups. Consultees were offered multiple opportunities to take part. We asked them their views regarding the strengths and gaps in Hertsmere's cultural and creative landscape, and explored ideas and opportunities for building a strong creative vision for Hertsmere's future.

- 141 consultees responded to the public survey.

- There was a high level of convergence of views

PHOTO:
Shenley by Matt Brown
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KEY THEMES FROM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Hertsmere's greatest strength is its **champions and community groups** who with little, or in some cases, no funding provide museums, festivals, theatre, cinema, live music and more, providing the bedrock of Hertsmere's cultural life. Community events are a key strength of the District. An important theme was to identify these cultural leaders and organisations and find ways to regularly, and formally, tap into their insights, ensuring they can contribute to a strong creative offer for Hertsmere for the future. It would be important to ensure that these champions understand their role receive appropriate support and funding going forward.

- There is a definite opportunity to explore further how these various individuals and groups could be amalgamated into something more than the sum of their parts. It was enormously encouraging to see the broad and deep engagement by local authority colleagues, town and parish councillors, and elected representatives in discussing the potential value of Hertsmere's creative offer. If this enthusiasm could be channelled into **supporting, mentoring, funding, and professionalising cultural leaders** then this could support a stronger culture sector more generally.

- **Film and TV** is also undoubtedly the area's cultural hallmark particularly in Borehamwood and Elstree. There are dedicated enthusiasts and volunteers who ensure this heritage is preserved but it needs renewed dedicated resources, time, and effort, to ensure that this is maintained. Participants suggested that one way of increasing the impact and preserving the heritage of this industry would be to tie film and TV more explicitly to a community engagement and training offer.

- There is a **pride in *place*** but these places tend to be people's own conurbations rather than there being a distinct Hertsmere identity. Hertsmere could align itself more closely with London and seek to benefit more from commuters, tourism, and inward investment. There is also a strong opportunity for Hertsmere to build a stronger collective cultural identity of its own, with the different towns celebrated for their own individuality and identity whilst sharing learnings and resources.

PHOTO:
Commemorating Film by Des Blenkinsopp
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- Hertsmere's overall creative and cultural offer is compromised by the **dispersed geography** of Hertsmere, its proximity to London, and the Borough's lack of historic investment in culture and the arts.

- Participants felt that as well as geographic disconnection, many of Hertsmere's cultural assets also feel disconnected from one another, and indeed from their potential audiences. Respondents felt a **need for stronger borough-wide promotion and marketing** of the cultural offer.

- It was felt that money could be well spent on bolstering Hertsmere's events programme and investing in community venues / hubs like the Radlett Centre, Wyllyotts Theatre, and 96 Shenley Road – this would also allow them to **develop more diverse audiences** via broader, less commercial programming without the threat of financial losses.

- Overall, our consultation revealed to us a Hertsmere which holds much more creative potential than the "commuter town" it is at times perceived to be.

- Our engagement suggests that while a **distinct tourism offer is likely to be a challenge** there is scope and appetite to consider how local assets can be nurtured, how culture contributes to quality of life, how the council can maximise its own resource spend, how community groups are supported and recognised, and the basis on which the council may deploy its own resources to **map, fund, promote and coalesce cultural activity** into more than the sum of its parts.

- The overall feeling is that Hertsmere has a lot to offer - a great place to live with a strong sense of community in its towns, close to London, with good quality of life, and a **nascent cultural scene**.

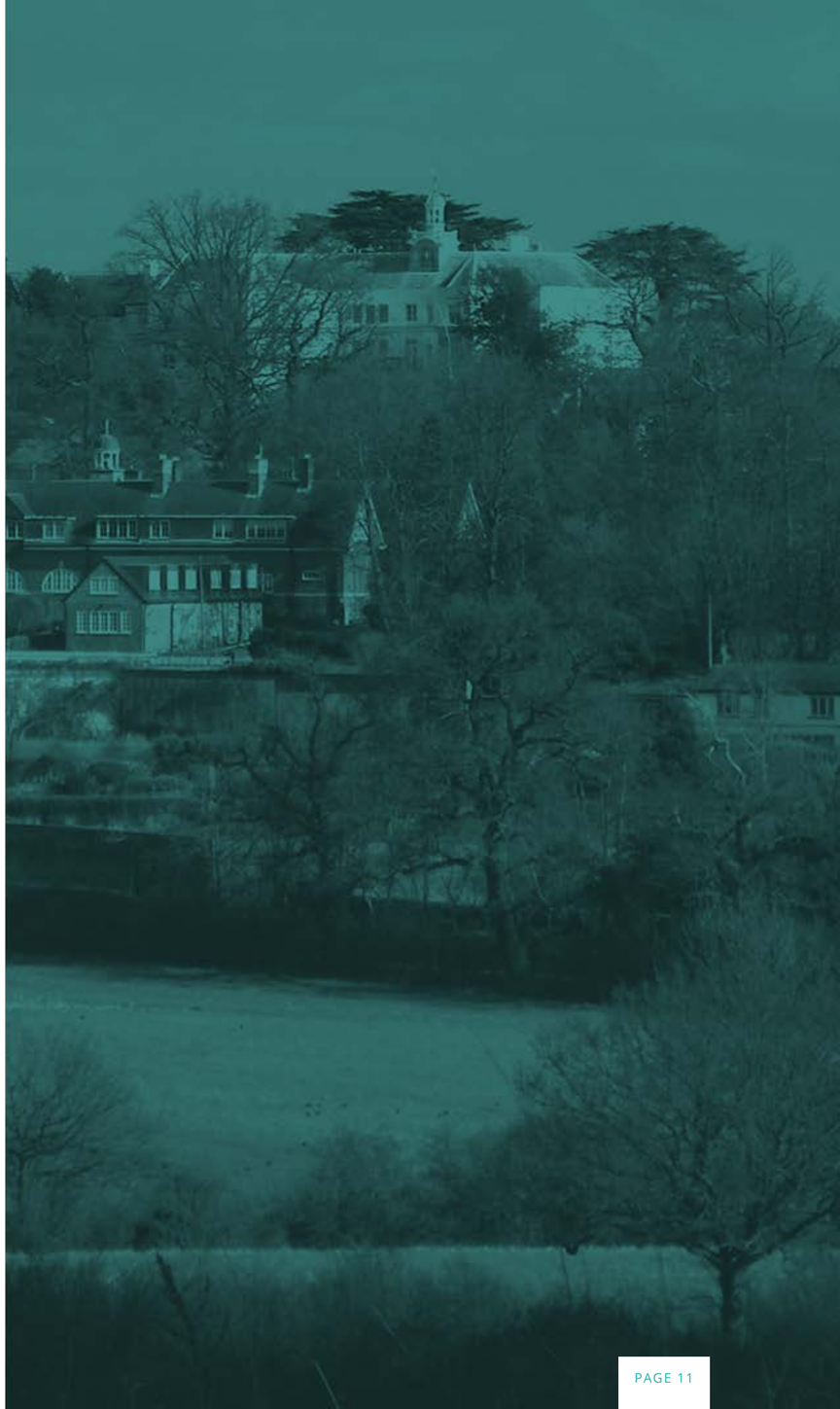

PHOTO:
Shenley Park by Peter O'Connor
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4. CULTURAL SECTOR IN NUMBERS

HERTSMERE'S CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SECTOR IN NUMBERS

- **Enterprises**: Hertsmere was home to an estimated **1,075 PAYE/VAT-registered** CI sector enterprises in 2021. Approx. 96% of these were micro-businesses with 10 employees or fewer – the same proportion as in the wider county and region.[1]

- **Employment**: the above employed around 3,570 people between them in 2021. Adding in sole traders and other small enterprises not captured by ONS BRES data, the true level of employment in the local CI sector is likely to be over **7,000**.

- **Direct GVA**: we estimate the annual economic output (GVA) of Hertsmere's CI sector in 2021 to be approximately **£375m**.

- **Total economic impact**: adjusting for multiplier effects, we estimate the total annual economic contribution of Hertsmere's CI sector to be in the region of **£560m**.

PHOTO:
Carver at work by Angelina Litvin
Unsplash

Hertsmere does not concentrate a significant number of assets for a borough of its size, with many being more **community-orientated** in nature and with **amateur/ grassroots activity**; such as community centres, public libraries, church halls, and local bars and pubs. **Galvanising these assets** within an ambitious vision and transformational cultural strategy will help Hertsmere grow the creative and visitor economy and provide life-enhancing opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

CATEGORY NAME	TOTAL
Cultural Venues	25
Recording and Rehearsal Spaces	21
Creative Workspaces	18
Public Realm	9
Festivals and Events	6
Creative Retail	8
Total	**87**

CULTURAL VENUES

23 were mapped including museums, historic sites, libraries, art centres, theatre and music venues (informal spaces such as bars and pubs). The most prominent were music venues (7) and museums (8) linked to local history and aviation. There are 3 arts centres in Borehamwood, Potters Bar and Radlett with a strong professional and amateur programme and capacity for larger audiences. These have the potential act as the Borough's key cultural hubs growing both local and wider audiences.

RECORDING AND REHEARSAL

There are 21 rehearsal spaces across dance, music and theatre, supported by educational programmes, organisations and networks including Elstree Screen Arts Academy. However, many are multi-functional which may limit availability and around half (10) are located in Borehamwood with the rest in the major towns. Other spaces are likely to be available in community and education settings which will be crucial given the habitual nature of rehearsal.

CREATIVE WORKSPACE

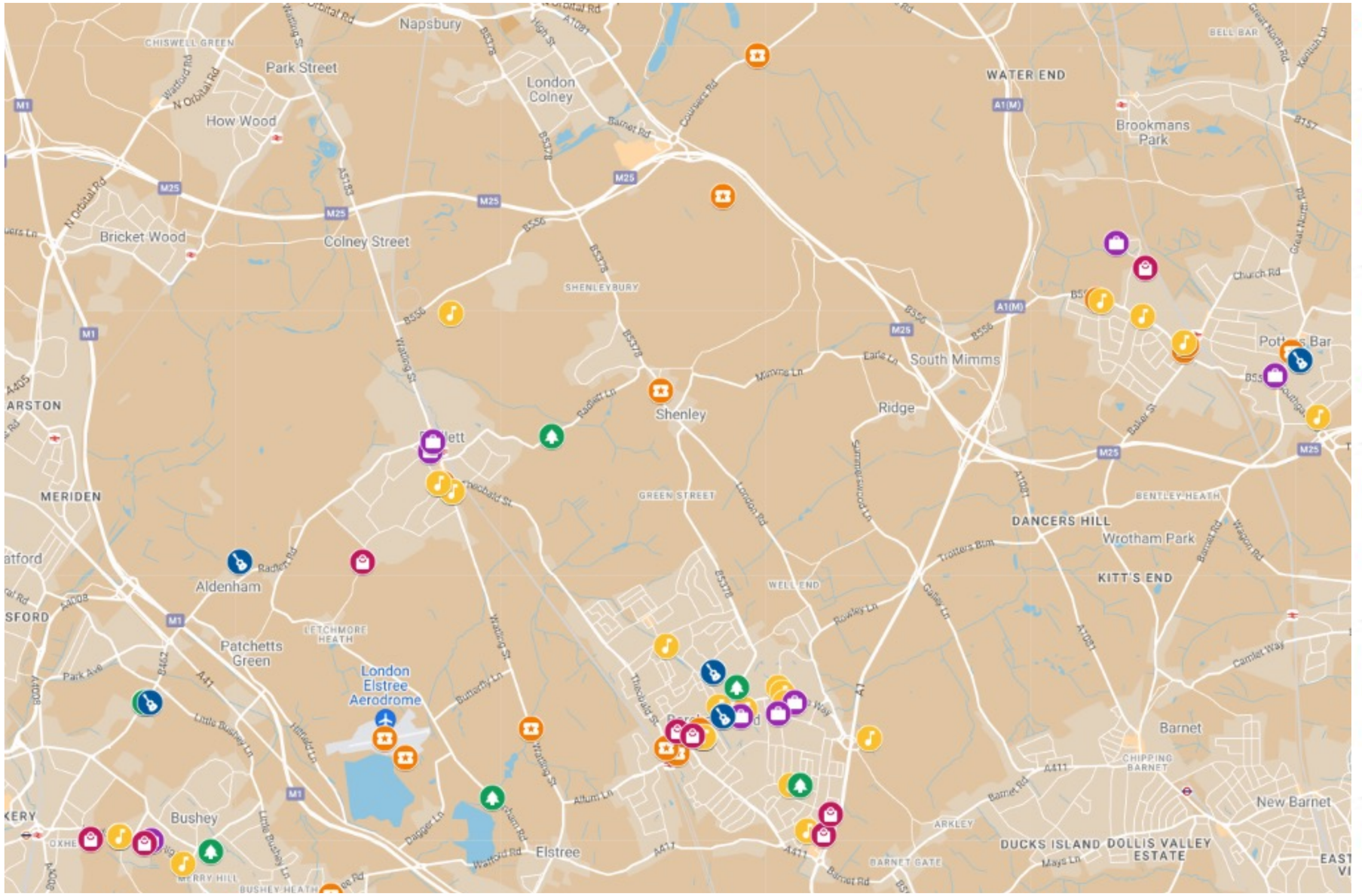
There are 9 facilities which target or currently accommodate creative industries tenants; 5 are co-working and office spaces and 4 are artist studios, workshops or light industrial units. The majority are in Borehamwood and Bushey with further provision in Watford.

PUBLIC REALM, FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Hertsmere has a small community-focused festival and events programme, the majority of which are run by Inspire All. This includes both one-time events and series across the towns. Elstree Film Festival was last held in 2021 and has the greatest potential for tourism and business development.

CREATIVE RETAIL

There are 8 art supply, music and equipment stores and the vast majority (6) being independent. Whilst there are no record stores, there is 1 on the outskirts of Watford.



All items

Recording and Rehearsal Spaces

All items

Creative Workspace

All items

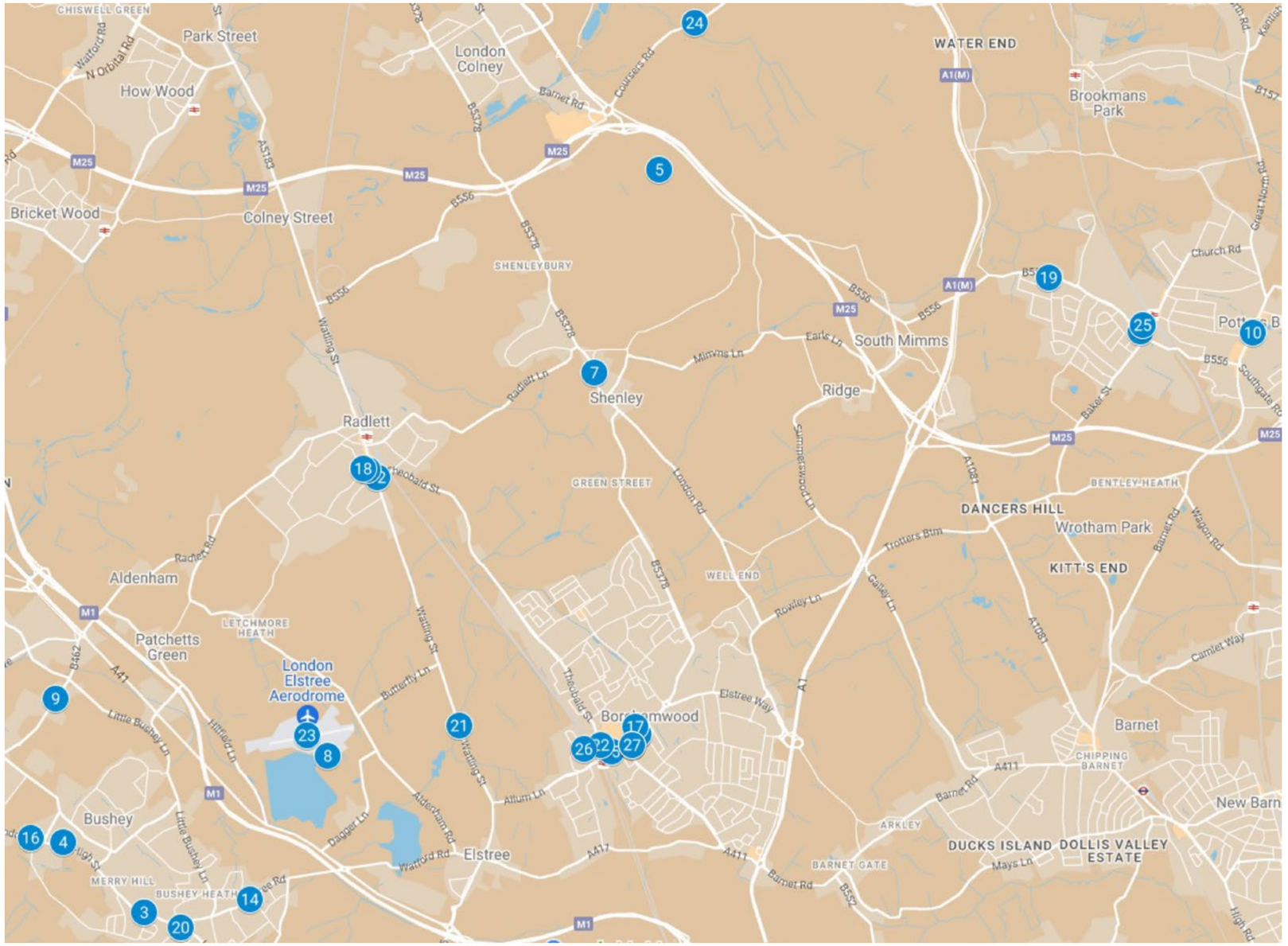
Public Realm

All items

Festivals and Events

All items

Creative Retail



1. 96 Shenley Road - Community Hub
2. Borehamwood Library
3. Bushey Library
4. Bushey Museum and Art Gallery
5. De Havilland Aircraft Museum
6. Elstree & Borehamwood Museum
7. Little Shenley Library
8. London Elstree Aerodrome
9. Metropolitan Bushey
10. Oakmere Library
11. Potters Bar Museum
12. Radlett and District Museum
13. Radlett Library
14. Reveley Lodge
15. The Alfred Arms
16. The Bushey Arena
17. The Good Companion
18. The Radlett Centre
19. The Strafford
20. The Three Crowns
21. The Waggon & Horses
22. The Wellington
23. Unlawful Art
24. Willows Activity Farm
25. Wyllyotts Theatre
26. Allum Hall
27. Reel Cinema

5. AUDIENCES

AUDIENCE PROFILES

Counterculture undertook an analysis of available audience and tourism data at the national, regional (East of England) and local level Hertsmere). It includes information of Audience Spectrum profiles, cultural engagement, arts attendance and demographic information.

Nearly two-thirds of Hertsmere's population are moderately to highly-engaged in cultural activity and generally have more disposable income to spend on cultural activities and experiences. This includes a broad range of ages and groups, with broad tastes but a common interest in heritage and mainstream activities:

- **'Experience Seekers'** (8%): younger individuals or couples (students to early/mid-career stages) who engage with art regularly. They make up a significant part of urban arts audiences with easy access, greater disposable income, and an interest in mainstream, contemporary and cultural diverse offers.
- **'Dormitory Dependables'** (20%): suburban and small-town residents, typically mature couples or busy families, with an interest in heritage activities and mainstream arts as a family outing or treat.
- **'Commuterland Culture Buffs'** (37%): affluent and typically mature families or retirees living in suburban and/or greenbelt areas. They are willing to travel and pay for premium experiences, frequently attend and have broad tastes, but prefer heritage and classical offers.

PHOTO:
Luis Quintero.
Unsplash

KEY CHALLENGES

However, Hertsmere is a borough of significant contrasts in terms of the economic and social outcomes which has an impact on capacity to engage with culture and preferred types of activity. There is a clear challenge and need to build audience numbers and improve access and engagement across the diversity of the borough and particularly in the most deprived areas. Nevertheless, price sensitivity (tickets, travel etc.) is fast becoming a concern for more audiences regardless of their financial position due to cost-of-living pressures which is seen as a major deterrent from attending culture events and is expected to last 6 months to 2 years.

Looking at Hertsmere's demographic the strategy should also consider:

- The challenges of an ageing population. Hertsmere like many areas will see an increase in 70+.
- Creating an offer that is inclusive of Hertsmere's changing demographics. This includes ethnic diversity and particularly the growing Asian population.
- Greater levels of deprivation in Bushey (particularly North Bushey), Borehamwood (particularly Cowley Hill) and Potters Bar (particularly Oakmere), which map onto the lower engaged audience profiles.
- Around 1/6 of the population identify as disabled with a smaller proportion limited a lot (5.9%) compared to a little (8.4%).

PHOTO:
Potters Bar Garage by Aubrey
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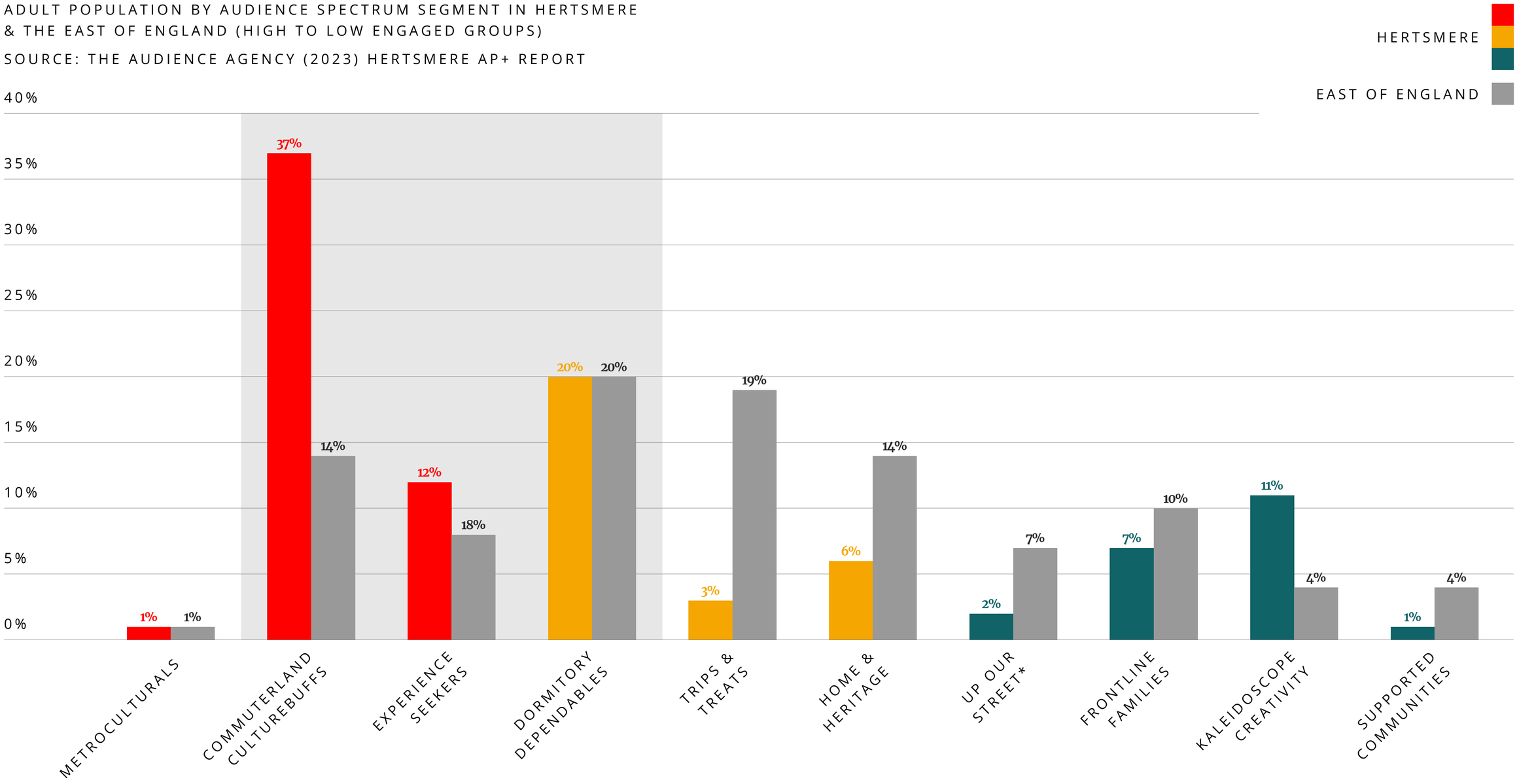
ADULT POPULATION BY AUDIENCE SPECTRUM SEGMENT IN HERTSMERE & THE EAST OF ENGLAND (HIGH TO LOW ENGAGED GROUPS)

SOURCE: THE AUDIENCE AGENCY (2023) HERTSMERE AP+ REPORT



*https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum

ARTS ATTENDANCE

ARTS ATTENDANCE IN HERTSMERE

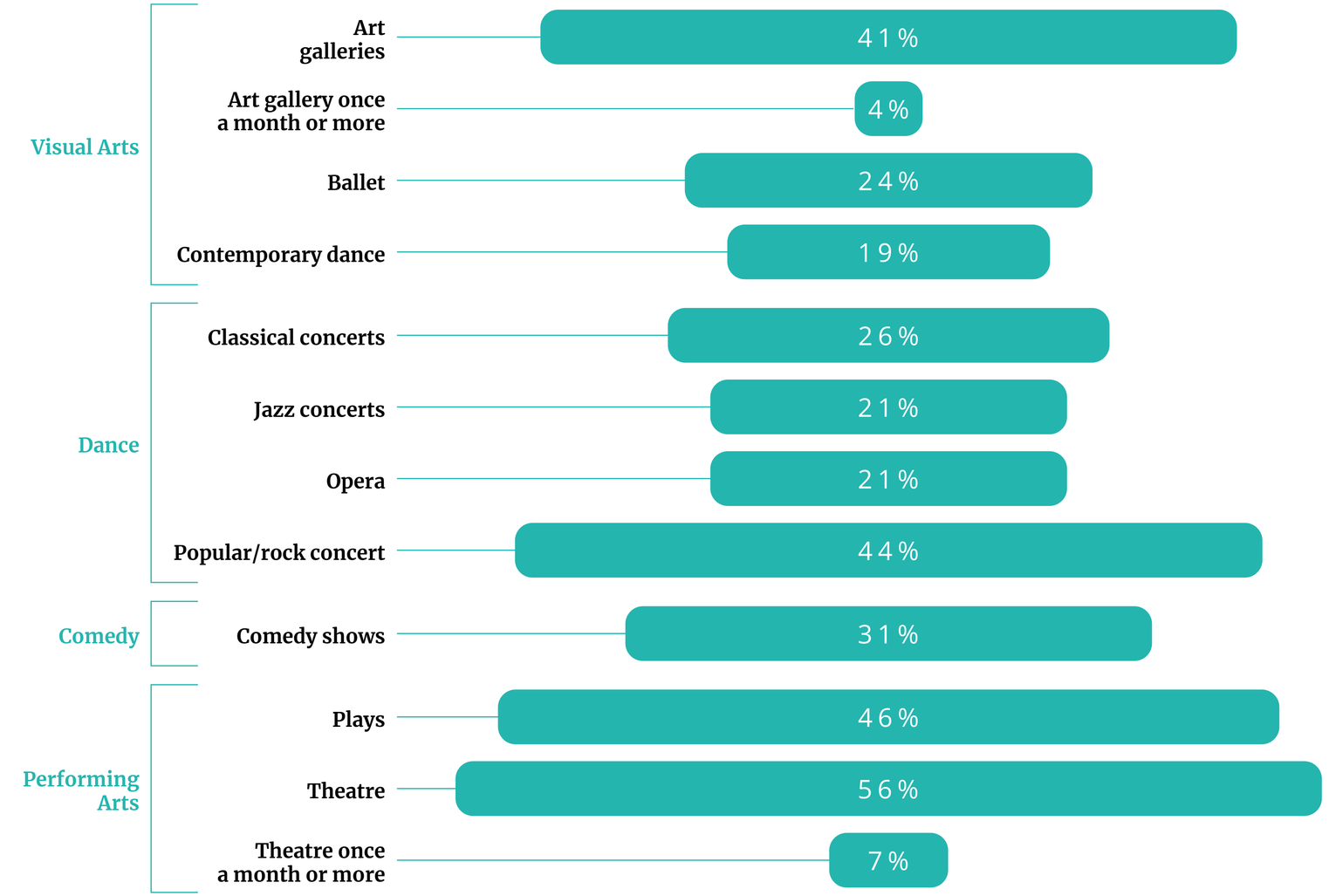


PHOTO:
Luis Quintero
Unsplash

SOURCE: THE AUDIENCE AGENCY (2023) HERTSMERE APR+ REPORT

6. WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

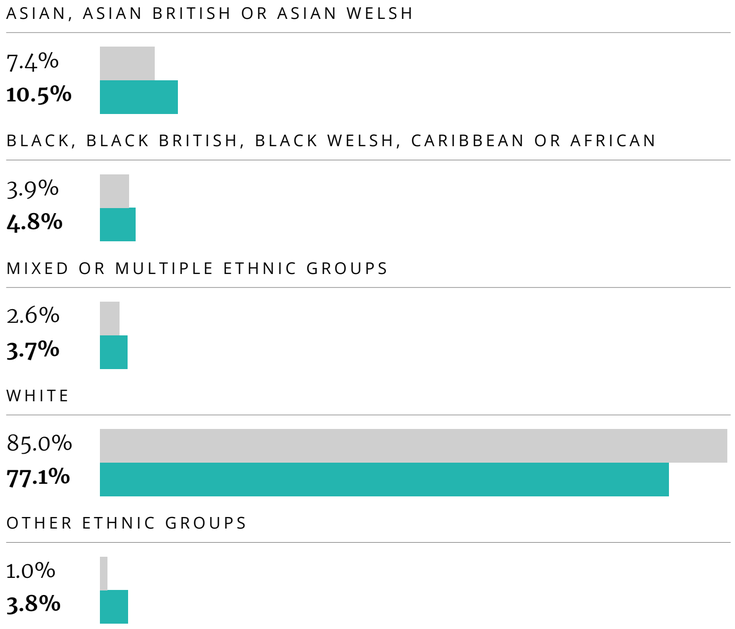
ETHNICITY:

Broadly speaking, the population is diversifying. 77.1% of residents identified as White in 2021 (down from 85%). Asian, Asian British/Welsh was the next most represented group at 10.5% (up from 7.4%). See graph 3.

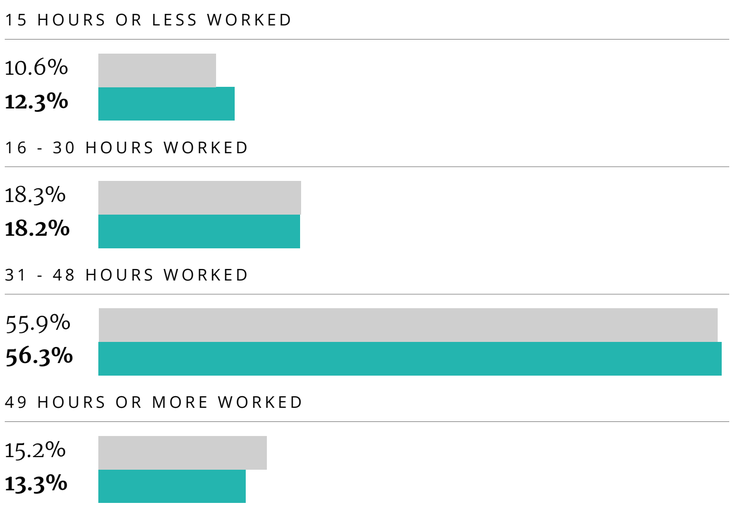
COUNTRY OF BIRTH:

In 2021, 75% of Hertsmere residents said they were born in England, down from 81% in 2011. Romania was next most represented at 3% (up from 0.65%) followed by India at 1.8% (up from 1.1%).

GRAPH 3:
HERTSMERE - % OF USUAL RESIDENTS BY ETHNIC GROUP



GRAPH 4: HERTSMERE - % OF 16+ EMPLOYED RESIDENTS BY NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK



GRAPH 3 & 4 SOURCE:
OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS -
2011 CENSUS AND CENSUS 2021

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY:

59.8% of residents aged 16+ said they were employed in 2021, down from 60.5% in 2011. The level of employment is slightly higher than that of the wider region (57.3% in 2021, down from 58.4%).

WORKING HOURS:

Hertsmere saw the East of England's second-largest percentage-point rise in the proportion of people aged 16+ who said they usually worked 15 hours or less per week (up from 10.6% in 2011 to 12.3% in 2021). See graph 4.

NB. Economic activity and working hours data in 2021 may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. VISION

OUR FUTURE

George Lucas could have chosen any galaxy far far away to base Star Wars but he picked our wonderful district. In doing so he confirmed something we all know. Hertsmere is the place to be when it comes to film and TV.

Film and TV is not the only reason to live, work and play here. Our most important asset beyond any building or stage is our people. Our people put their hands up, join in, and they make Hertsmere.

Like Princess Leia and Hans Solo our cultural story is a love story. Our future is one which is about people. A future that recognises and remunerates their talents. A future that prioritises investment into community infrastructure. And a future where everyone can take part in culture.

We are committed to a future where the Council has more capacity to invest, convene and support the Borough's wonderful community groups. Our commitment will ensure that community groups have the assets they need to play an even bigger role in the cultural life of the district.

It also means recognising that there are undoubtedly talented people in our district that have not had opportunities to contribute to Hertsmere's cultural life. The Council will work with its partners, education providers and local groups to develop a cultural and creative education offer that builds a more resilient workforce within the creative industries.

Building out the cultural infrastructure also means more opportunity to celebrate the great work that is already going on in Hertsmere. It means a lively public events programme that celebrates the area's history while looking toward its future and it means strategic investment in nurturing new cultural groups.

The future is one where everyone involved in Hertsmere's cultural life not only feels loved, but they will know it too.

PHOTO:
Casey Horner
Unsplash

8. THE NEED

Issues & Challenges

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Few cultural venues for a district of the size
- Urgent need for investment in the Council's capacity to support culture
- Well organised but dispersed community groups
- Poor connections between parts of the District

CREATIVITY

- Connecting skills, talent and opportunity
- Developing future skills and talent
- Making local culture more visible
- Extending and improving education and work opportunities for and with local talent and business

COMMUNITIES

- Local context of an affluent community within a UK context with pockets of deprivation
- There is no continual coherent cultural offer as groups largely coalesce around local identities
- Lack of clear mapping of which communities and who is driving the future
- An ageing population with distinct difficulties for young people to access housing and the labour market.

POLICY

- Historic lack of investment in cultural infrastructure
- Wider economic challenges on budgets and affordability of housing for workers
- A really stretched cultural infrastructure that prevents wider engagement with economic opportunity in the District

9. THE OPPORTUNITY

Opportunity

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Close to London
- A wonderful place to live
- Some cultural venues and good green spaces
- Small amount of creative and practice space but with potential for expansion

CREATIVITY

- Good facilities with potential for talent development
- Commitment and understanding of film and television history
- Large catchment area for attracting talent
- Opportunity to engage with businesses through creativity

COMMUNITIES

- Lots of enthusiastic organisers of local groups with the potential to scale
- A real pride in Hertsmere
- Strong identities within Hertsmere
- Opportunity to build new communities of cultural interest owing to lack of current engagement

POLICY

- Enthusiasm to invest in infrastructure by the new administration
- Opportunity to align economic opportunities around film with cultural ambitions
- Experienced and dedicated team that are experts in their patch with the ability to mobilise people in Hertsmere

10. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2024-2028

A NEW HOPE

Access to culture is changing. The cost-of-living crisis is a key barrier. Over 60% of people have said that it is deterring them from attending culture events (over double compared to Covid) and an even higher proportion (74%) expect this to still be the case in the next 6 month to 2 years

47% feel worse off financially compared to last year, with 51% attending events less. Money was cited as the main reason and people are seeking free events and those closer to home. There is no difference among those who feel better off.

In the past 12 months, the adult population in Hertsmere is more likely to have visited museums (23%) than stately homes/castles (17%) or archaeological sites (5%). Considering the dominant audience groups and preference for heritage activities alongside the popularity of arts activities, this is somewhat surprising.

Therefore, the Council must have a cultural offer that is accessible, fun and aimed toward economic growth

Hertsmere Council is going to devotes its energies into two main cultural offers

PHOTO:
De Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre by Amanda Slater
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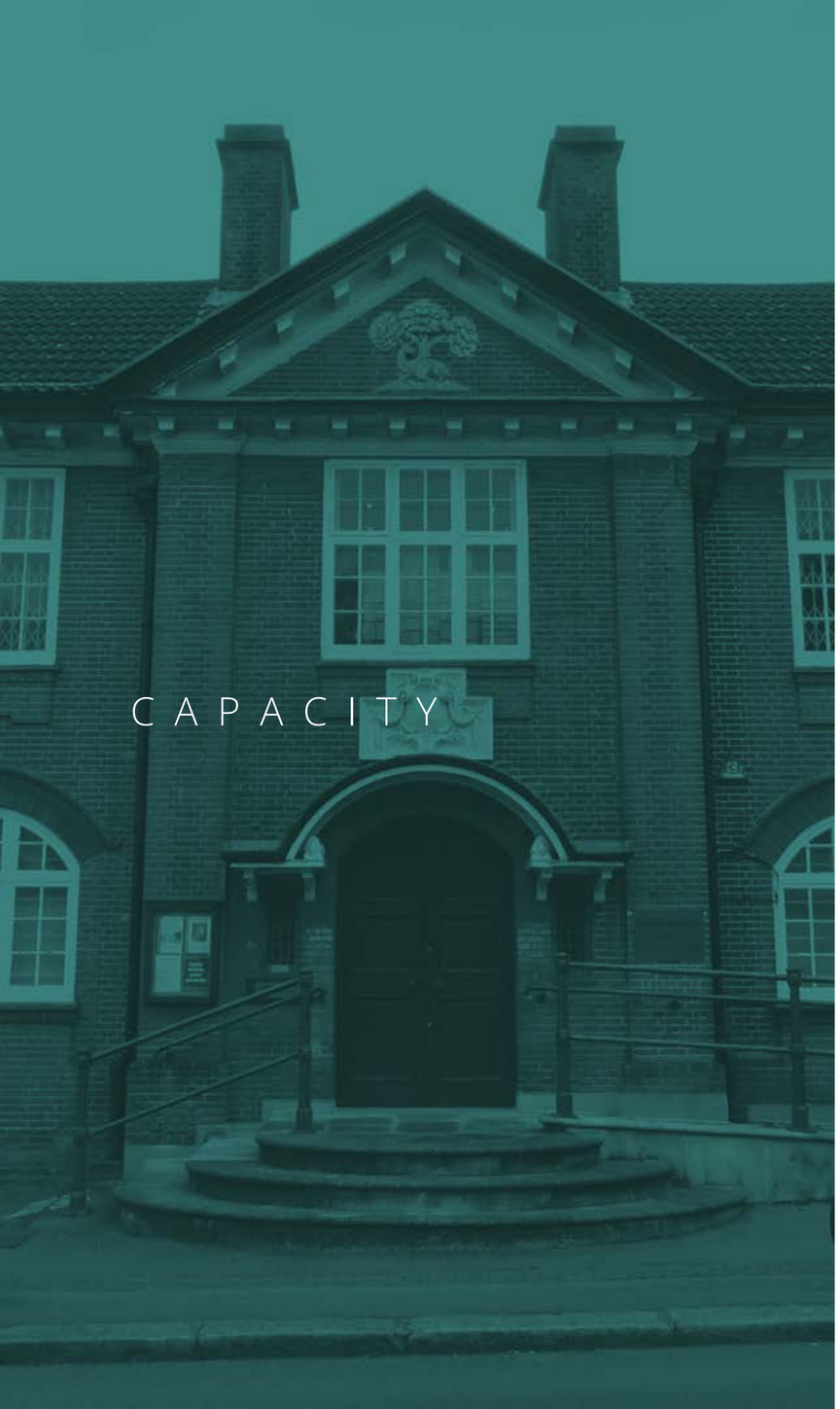
HERITAGE

A heritage offer that speaks to the history of Hertsmere as the centre of film and TV. This will require significant exploration but could include the repurpose of vacant spaces toward a visitor attraction, investment in the expansion of existing facilities, or a mixed digital and in person space

EVENTS AND TOURISM

An events offer that is aimed at growing the tourism potential of the Borough. We will convene groups like Bushey Museum and Art Gallery, Elstree and Borehamwood Museum, Potters Bar Museum, Radlett Museum and Archives Group, Elstree Screen Heritage. Hertsmere Borough Council. Hertfordshire County Council, Visit Herts, Hertfordshire Association of Museums, The De Havilland Aircraft Museum, as well as the groups and organisations involved Hertsmere's Year of Culture in 2020 to organise an annual events programme that is aimed at attracting tourists to the area.



CAPACITY

INTERNAL INVESTMENT

CURATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Hertsmere Borough Council lacks the internal capacity to turn its big ambitions into a reality.

While a dedicated staff team are committed to working with businesses, supporting volunteers and making the whole cultural ecosystem tick, Hertsmere is just short of resources for an area of its size. The people of Hertsmere deserve dedicated attention to their cultural and creative lives.

The Council will invest in new posts to expand capacity in events and the management and curation of the Council's whole cultural and creative offer from investment and partnerships to co-delivery. As part of this approach the Council will also seek greater integration between its cultural teams and wider functions in housing, asset management and investment.

COMMUNICATIONS

Residents and community groups told us that they are sure there is lots going on but they don't always hear about it.

Our commitment to making a cultural offer available to all means that residents must first know what is happening. As part of our investment in capacity we will invest in our communications. This will not only mean that more residents can find out more about what is going on but people from outside of the District will also have greater opportunity to come see everything we have to offer.

This will start by ensuring that our events and attractions are linked in to wider marketing platforms like Visit Herts and over time we will invest in regulating collating and updating events on our own platforms.

PHOTO:
Bushey Museum by Richard Kelly
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CULTURAL COMPACT

Every part of Hertsmere has an identity to be proud of.

We are one body made up of many parts that makes our whole place function. People are our greatest asset and we want to give more opportunity for people to work together on the big bold and exciting in our area.

We will develop, fund and host a cultural compact that brings together community and cultural leaders to bid for funds, develop ideas and work on programmes across the Borough. At first this will be chaired by the Council but over time it will be led by groups in Hertsmere. The group will be responsible for:

- Coordinating activity
- Seeking new funders
- Promoting the work of the District
- Sharing resources and best practice

PARTNERS

Hertsmere sits only a train ride away from one of the world's greatest cities; London.

London is an economic and cultural powerhouse where a significant proportion of Hertsmere's residents work and spend their leisure time. Working with the film and TV industry in the Borough the Council will develop a cultural investment prospectus which is designed to attract cultural businesses, industries and organisations to set up in the area and take advantage of Hertsmere's proximity to London.

Beyond London Hertsmere also enjoys close connections to Watford and St. Albans amongst other places. We will work with our local partners to build capacity and share resources across Hertfordshire. This may be supporting mutual talent development or using local and unusual venues for hosting local productions.

PHOTO:
Elstree & Borehamwood Station by Dr. Neil Clifton.
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INSIGHT

MAPPING CULTURAL GROUPS

In developing this strategy we spoke to dozens and dozens of people that were volunteering, supporting their local groups and putting on activities that contribute to the Borough in lots of ways. There are some really visible assets like Elstree and Borehamwood Museum but there are lots of small scale activities that could be built up if only we had greater visibility of them.

We will invest in developing a database of cultural groups and their activities with a view to better understanding their work, supporting them and working with them to attract new supporters and funders.

LOCAL FUNDING

Local groups make great use of the funding the Council provides them. They keep key facilities open and provide cultural services that otherwise could not exist. However, we have not done enough to collect and report the impact of this work or encourage new organisations to emerge through providing them with funds.

We will launch an evaluation of our cultural funding with a view to opening a new funding round system to encourage participation from a broader range of cultural groups.

EVALUATION

Speaking to residents and groups throughout Hertsmere illustrated the breadth of activity going on across the Borough. National funders require that we can continually demonstrate that our cultural work is not only joyous but delivering positive and inclusive health, wealth and education outcomes. To this end we will develop a robust evaluation methodology for the activities we support and use this as the basis to share our impact to attract new supporters and funders.

PHOTO:
Elstree & Borehamwood Museum by Matt Brown
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INCLUSIVITY

Hertsmere is changing. 77.1% of residents identified as White in 2021 (previously 85%), followed by Asian at 10.5% (+3.1%) which was the biggest increase in line with regional and national trends. The population is more affluent than the UK average but there are some pockets of deep deprivation. The population is also ageing with a demographic shift toward an older population.

As an approach as the Council becomes more involved in facilitating, funding and promoting the Borough's cultural work we will ensure it is done with inclusivity at its heart. This means an approach that is responsive to a changing Hertsmere while always being mindful of the different needs and experiences of our community.

PHOTO:
Soundtrap
Unsplash

INTER-FAITH ACTIVITY

Hertsmere is a religiously diverse borough and home to one of the largest Jewish communities in the country and Borehamwood is twinned with Shoham in Israel. In the context of global atrocities and conflict we believe culture can bring people together. We will work with our local religious leaders to develop inter-faith activities open to residents in all areas of the District.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

There are talented creatives of all kind across Hertsmere. We will facilitate the opportunity for them to apply for small funding pots, meet other creatives, and partner with employers and colleges for them to obtain skills and qualifications, so they can make an even bigger impact on the creative live of the District.

BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT

Hertsmere is unlikely to be eligible for some national funds from government and arts organisations. Our best chance of bringing more funding for culture into the district is to combine our talents, grow our own businesses, and put together a compelling case for external investment into the District.

INCUBATOR

A proportion of our cultural fund will be used to incubate new cultural businesses. We will work with local businesses to seek out mentors, supporters and additional funders, to support the growth of new cultural businesses in the area.

PROSPECTUS

A thriving creative offer and quality of life contribute to making Hertsmere an attractive place to invest. The Council will work collaboratively with cultural groups across the Borough to promote the wonderful cultural life and support wider investment.

ALIGNMENT OF POLICIES

Culture can support the economic life of areas but delivering cultural activity requires coordination with lots of bodies and functions (like events and space management, marketing and place branding, councils, businesses, community groups, and local leaders). The council will use this strategy as a starting point to align policies on asset management, economic growth, health and wellbeing, and place based development, behind a greater cultural output.

PHOTO:
Christopher Bill
Unsplash

QUALITY OF LIFE

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Britain's high streets have a diversity of land uses and whilst it varies across places, they are generally dominated by residential and retail uses which appear to have a mutual relationship – residential increases have occurred simultaneously with retail decreases, a trend accelerated by Covid-19.

In March 2020, in line with national averages, Hertsmere's high street was 61.3% residential, 28.5% retail and 7% office space. Likewise, there was significantly less for community (2.7%) and leisure (0.5%).

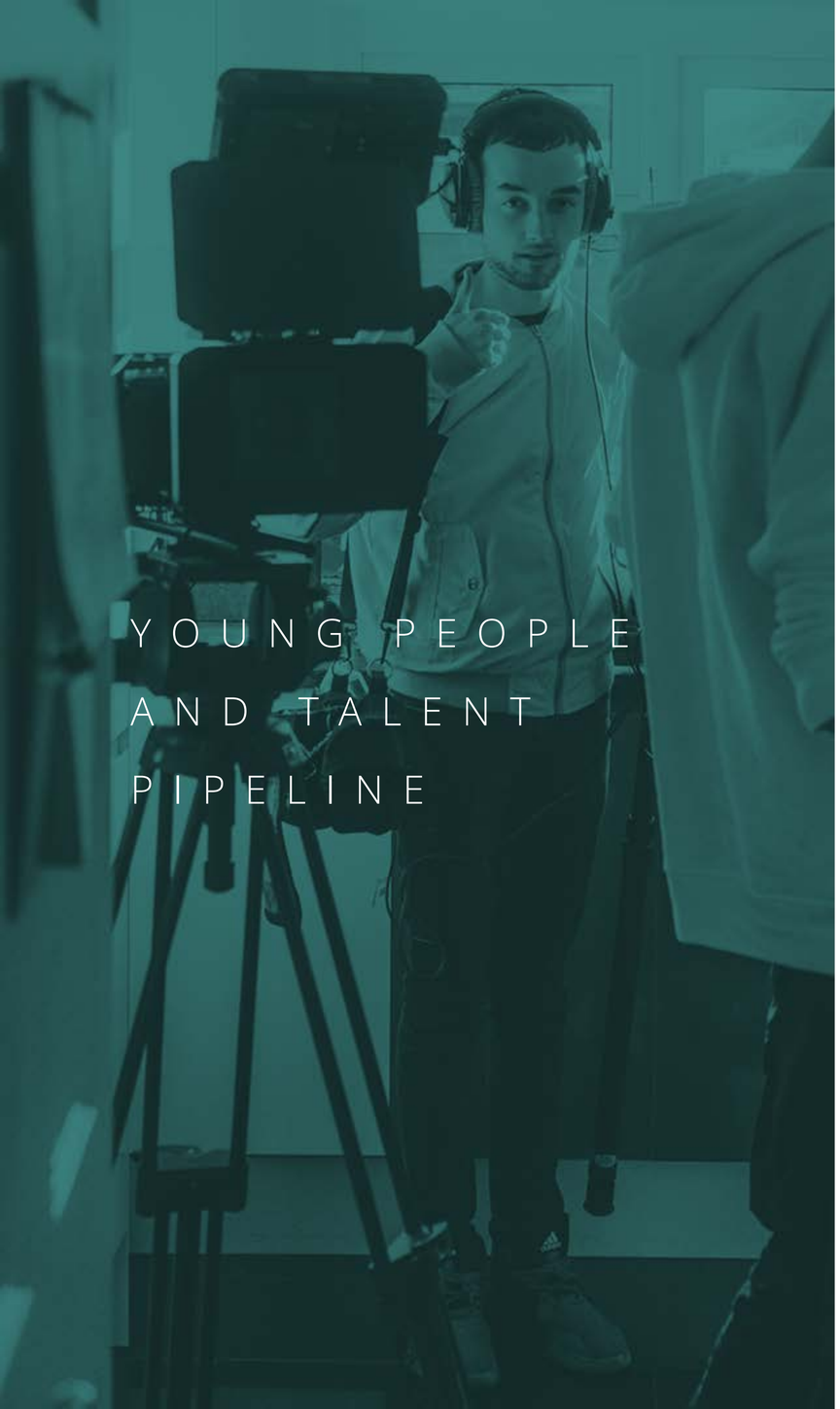
According to ONS (2020), **Shenley Road** (Borehamwood) had the most community spaces (14) and leisure and recreational spaces (5) on a high street for the Borough.

The Council has purchased 80 Shenley Road and surrounding land to support future town centre regeneration in Borehamwood. The Council will explore the opportunity to align wider investment policies, asset management and purchase powers to bring culture directly to the high street through encouraging more mixed-use cultural spaces across the Borough.

PHOTO:
Shenley Road by Martin Addison
CC BY 2.0 DEED

PUBLIC REALM

Hertsmere has wonderful spaces that are valued by residents across the Borough. With additional investment into Council infrastructure public art will be brought to green spaces and in doing so support local artists in the district.



YOUNG PEOPLE AND TALENT PIPELINE

We believe that all children in Hertsmere should have access to high quality cultural experiences, from early years onwards. We want to invest in our schools to ensure teachers understand the importance of creative learning, and we want our young people to see pathways into the creative industries opening up for them.

With the might of Elstree, BBC Elstree, Sky, and Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden on our doorstep, the scale of opportunity for Hertsmere's young people to pursue careers in the film and TV industry is phenomenal. Education and talent development partners such as Elstree Screen Arts Academy, Screen Hertfordshire and Sky are doing fantastic work in the borough to develop industry trainees - we will bring these and other key county wide partners such as the LEP, Hertfordshire Screen Office and Film Hertfordshire to the table together to explore strategic routes to connecting up the talent pipeline, ensuring a wealth of placements and jobs for local young people of diverse backgrounds, responding to the skills shortage in the film and TV industry, and benefitting the studios with a flow of low cost yet highly impressive young talent.

PHOTO:
Ben Collins
Unsplash

Our ambition is to become the leading local authority in the UK for strategic film and TV talent development, with resources and policy in place to help us achieve this. To achieve this aim we will introduce four key actions:

- We will revisit our commissioning, procurement and supply chain practices to ensure that where creative industries are investing in the district they are creating high quality internships, opportunities and jobs for young people.

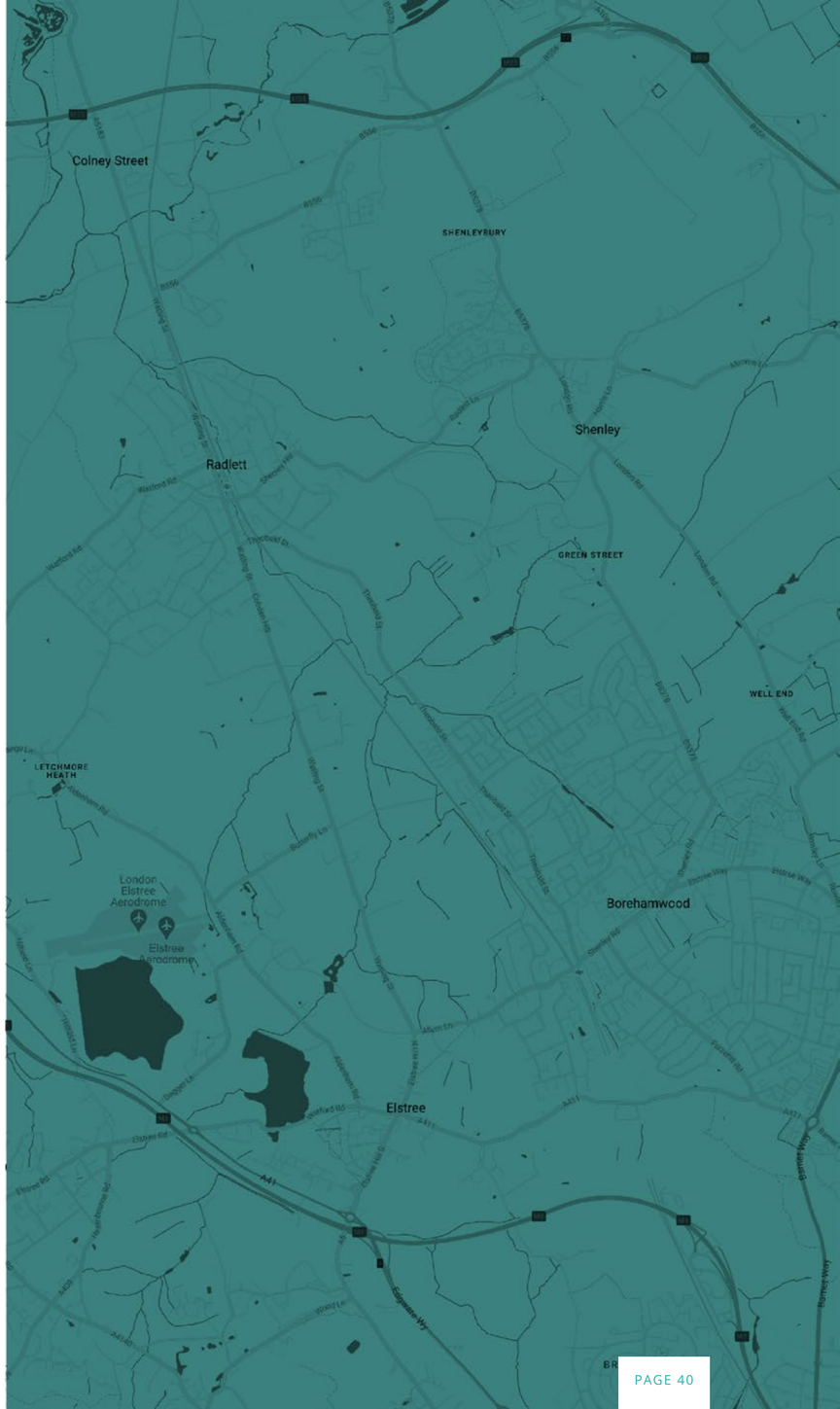
- We will build a database of senior production staff and freelancers who do the hiring for commissions and work with Hertsmere's Economic Development and Film Office to build long term direct contacts within the industry.

- We will develop education partnerships across the Borough to ensure that we are making the most of local insight to generate more opportunities for young people.

- The Council will use its new cultural groups to bring together education providers and creative industries to help ensure continued alignment between qualifications and industry, and to foster partnerships that can lead to a smoother transition for students seeking employment.

11. DELIVERY PLAN

The Strategy will be underpinned by a detailed action plan and roadmap for delivery. Following the approval of the plan the Council will devote its energies to setting out how it will phase spending, plans, and work streams within the strategy. The first step will be to develop some of the internal infrastructure measures to make the plan possible. From these solid foundations the wider ambitions for creatives, cultural groups, volunteers, businesses, and all of Hertsmere's residents can emerge. It is the Council's ambition to build the strategy in tandem with partners. The strength of this strategy is that it encompasses a wide range of industries, interests, and individuals. In working with them as delivery partners for this work an even more creative Hertsmere can emerge.



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