

Date of Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## UK Shared Prosperity Fund cultural programme

### Report summary:

The report provides a summary of the third year of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) Cultural Programme, from April 2024 – March 2025. This is a three year funded programme which is helping to both support the delivery of East Devon's Cultural Strategy 2022-2031 as well as deliver funding into our district's diverse and distinctive creative communities and help to support their activities and events. The three year Cultural Programme is now complete and an extension Y4 has been agreed in principle.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

### Recommendation:

That the Arts & Culture Forum:

- endorses this report and the successful delivery of the year three UK SPF Cultural Programme.

### Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Forum is informed and updated regularly on the progress of East Devon Cultural Strategy. The Cultural Programme year three outcomes will feed into the overarching monitoring and evaluation being reported to MHCLG by the Economic Development team as the UK SPF programme co-ordinators.

Officer: Sarah Elghady, Cultural Producer; tel 01395 517500. [Sarah.Elghady@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Elghady@eastdevon.gov.uk)

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☐ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

## Climate change Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

**Links to background information** Click here to enter links to background information; appendices online; and previous reports. These must link to an electronic document. Do not include any confidential or exempt information.

### Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ Outstanding Place and Environment
  - ☒ Outstanding Homes and Communities
  - ☐ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
  - ☐ Outstanding Council and Council Services
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## Report in full

### 1. Year 3 UK SPF Cultural Programme Activity (April 2023 – March 2024)

1.1 In Year 3, the original allocation for the Creative Programme in 2024/25 was £40,000. Due to the high level of demand and strength of bids received for the Creative East Devon Fund, this allocation was increased by £12,000 as there was a forecast underspend in the admin budget available. This brought the Year 3 allocation to £52,000.

1.2 In Y3 the Cultural Programme predominantly focused on two activities; the continued support for and development of the Arts and Culture East Devon (ACED) network through meetings and training, and continued delivery of the Creative East Devon Fund grant scheme. Funding was also designated to support the new initiative Screen Devon.

### 2. Arts and Culture East Devon

2.1 The Arts and Culture East Devon (ACED) network saw considerable growth in Year 3, expanding its membership from 150 in March 2024 to 204 members by March 2025. EDDC continued to provide support to the network through running meetings three times a year, sending monthly newsletters, providing free training opportunities, and recruiting new ACED Champions and mentors. Network meetings took place at Seaton Gateway Theatre, Manor Pavilion Theatre and Poltimore House – ensuring that by changing locations each time we maximised engagement across the district.

2.2 Two knowledge gaps were identified in the ACED Champions Network and we successfully recruited for an ACED Inclusion Champion and ACED Festivals Champion to join the nine existing ACED Champions in Y3. These roles co-chair the ACED Network meetings, assist in setting the agenda, give input into the East Devon Cultural Strategy progress, share knowledge and events related to their specialisms and sit on the panel of the Volunteer of the Year Award, which successfully launched at the start of Y3. This award has now just recently just opened for nominations for the second year and will be presented at our next ACED Network meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup> at A La Ronde to an honour a volunteer's outstanding contribution to an East Devon arts / heritage organisation or festival and recognise the invaluable impact they make. Further details to submit nominations can be found on the ACED website: [Volunteering Opportunities | Arts and Culture East Devon](#)

### 3. ACED Training

3.1 Ten free training sessions were made available and delivered to a total of 99 ACED members in Year 3. These were: Producing Live Events, Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, Social Media Advertising, Corporate Sponsorship, Individual Giving and Digital Accessibility. For museums we delivered specific training in: Textile Conservation, Accreditation for museums, Care of Photography and Natural History Collection Care.

3.2 The majority of the training sessions were held in person following a survey that indicated this was preferred to online. To support the evaluation process, attendees were asked to rate the quality of the training provided and how relevant it was to their work. Of the responses provided, positive feedback was given across the board, with all strongly or mostly agreeing that the training was relevant, of a high standard, and improved their knowledge and understanding. A recent testimonial from an attendee of our digital accessibility session in January 2025 stated: "Thank you for the excellent training. Lots of super tools to use - making life easier and accessible for many more people, including me."

#### **4. Creative East Devon Fund**

4.1 A total of 17 grants, totalling £37,000 were awarded through the Creative East Devon Fund (CEDF) represented the majority of Year 3 Spend. A full list of projects that were awarded funding can be viewed on the ACED website: [Creative East Devon Fund - Grant Recipients | Arts and Culture East Devon \(aced.org.uk\)](https://www.aced.org.uk). The fund was designed to provide small grants to cultural projects and events and was exclusively available to ACED members, who could apply for grant amounts between £500 and £3,000. Although there was a 10% match requirement, in-kind contributions were accepted as match funding to assist in overcoming financial barriers of potential applicants.

4.2. The main requirement for applications was the demonstration of alignment with the East Devon Cultural Strategy. 33 applications were received in Y3 and these were reviewed by two officers and scored against creative engagement, link to the Cultural Strategy, deliverability, value for money, and public benefit. Additionally, all applications requesting £1,500 or above were required to meet at least one UK SPF output or outcome and provide information on how they would measure and evidence its achievement. Once all projects had been appraised and moderated, the scores and recommendations were presented to the UK SPF panel for consideration.

4.3 The 17 impact reports from the grant recipients have recently been received, as projects came to completion at the end of March 2025 and the outcomes will be presented at the next Forum meeting.

#### **5 Grants for Museums**

5.1 In addition to the Creative East Devon Fund, 6 digital equipment grants were awarded to 6 museums totalling £2800 in February 2025. The recipients were: Seaton Museum, Exmouth Museum, Whimble Heritage Centre, Axminster Heritage Centre, Ottery Museum and Sidmouth Museum. Equipment included a collections care database called Modes, a refurbished laptop, temperature and humidity sensors, audio and camera equipment and display screens.

#### **6 Cultural Tourism Map**

6.1 The new East Devon [Cultural Tourism Map](#) project has been successfully delivered working with a graphic designer and featuring 50 cultural partners. There is a printed version of the map (of which 40,000 copies have been printed and 10,000 distributed to high footfall locations in the South West through Glide Media and the rest were distributed via the map partners) and a digital version which sits on a dedicated web page with individual listing for each entry on the map that can be updated. We are currently running a digital campaign to promote the map with PR & Marketing Agency Chalk and Ward. This includes Google Ads and PR articles. The majority of funds for this project came from the SPF Sustainable Tourism Programme and a £2,500 contribution was made from the Cultural Programme budget.

#### **7 Year 4 Cultural Programme: April 2025 – March 2026**

The Cultural Programme has been allocated £37,985 for 2025/26 and the plan has been approved by Cabinet and the Combined County Authority, although we are awaiting formal confirmation of the funding from both the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government and the CCA.

Beyond March 2026 funding for continued delivery of the East Devon Cultural Strategy remains uncertain.

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**Financial implications:**

No further financial implications arising other than those detailed in the report.

**Legal implications:**

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this summary report.