

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

## WHAT'S IN THIS ACTION PLAN?

This action plan is a key outcome of an 18 month research project commissioned by Bromsgrove Arts and Culture Consortium (made up of Bromsgrove Festival, Bromsgrove International Musicians' Competition, Avoncroft Museum, Artrix, Bromsgrove Arts Alive, Severn Arts, Worcestershire Arts Partnership and convened by Bromsgrove District Council).

The £72,000 project, funded by Arts Council England, Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council, the Elmley Foundation, Bromsgrove Society and the Len Giles Trust is called Tell Me What You Want.

Working with our research partner the Beatfreeks Collective, our project has involved over 1000 conversations with members of the public and organisations throughout Bromsgrove. As a result many times that number have been engaged across the length and breadth of the District. We asked:

- 1. What do the people of Bromsgrove District want from arts, culture and heritage?**
- 2. What barriers to engagement exist, and how can these be addressed?**

In summary the people and organisations of Bromsgrove told us:

*"We Want Space. We Want Connection. We Want Participation to be Easy. We Want Our Voices to be Heard."*

The detailed observations of the project were determined in two phases. During Phase One people told us what stops them engaging – and what we have to do to change things for the better. We observed a need for:

- 1. More engagement data focussed on demographics.**
- 2. Space in which citizens can enfranchise themselves.**
- 3. More celebration of the importance of art, heritage and culture.**
- 4. Going where people already are.**
- 5. Complementing not competing with the wider Midlands offer.**
- 6. Understanding growth is not for everyone.**
- 7. Spaces for groups to come together.**
- 8. Growing what arts, heritage and culture means in Bromsgrove.**
- 9. Re-approaching how decisions are made.**
- 10. Complementing existing engagement elsewhere.**

We determined that broadly speaking 4 key groups of people were under engaged in arts, culture and heritage in the area and they were:

- 1. Young people aged 15 – 20 years.**
- 2. Isolated elderly people.**
- 3. Lower socio economic groups.**
- 4. Parents with older children.**

For further information about Phase One please visit the report [here](#).



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During Phase Two of the project, we collaborated with these 4 under engaged groups through action research activity and identified a further number of key barriers which we need to address – as well as ideas for how we can break these barriers down:

- 1. Travel costs are too high. We need to keep things local and use community spaces where possible.**
- 2. Adult responsibilities, particularly parenthood, can make it hard to engage. In particular, we need to consider the distinct needs of parents.**
- 3. Sometimes a lack of interest-based community is a barrier. We need to foster connections and create communities of interest.**
- 4. Unfamiliar settings and activities can be intimidating. We need to make taking the first step (i.e. booking a place on something new) as easy as possible.**
- 5. Adults can be self-conscious when trying something for the first time. We need to build up people's confidence.**
- 6. Where there is a lack of local spaces, we need to create those spaces.**
- 7. Where existing definitions of culture are excluding people, we need to change our understanding of what constitutes art, heritage and culture.**

For further information about Phase Two please visit the report [here](#)

The 1000+ engagements we have had form the basis of our vision for Bromsgrove District – as a place where we use arts, culture and heritage to raise each other up.

We have three primary goals:

- 1. To widen participation in arts, culture and heritage.**
- 2. To elevate the wellbeing of the residents of Bromsgrove District.**
- 3. To strengthen the communities of Bromsgrove District.**

Our cultural vision and action plan sets out four different routes we will follow to realise our vision and goals:

- 1. Making connections - building a more connected Bromsgrove District through celebrating Bromsgrove's creativity and history.**
- 2. Making space - bringing arts, culture and heritage activity to local and everyday spaces.**
- 3. Making Participation Easy - working in partnership to widen participation in arts, culture and heritage.**
- 4. Making Our Voices Heard - diversifying governance and building a more flexible, dynamic and resilient cultural sector.**

Full details of these routes, including how BACC will approach governance, securing funding and reporting are set out in the full action plan. [here](#).



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council  
[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)



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