



# Culture and Creative Industries Strategy



Basildon Council



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## 01. ABOUT

### Setting the cultural goal for Basildon Town Centre, now, in 5 years and in 20+ years



#### Role

Basildon town centre should be the heart of our borough. A Culture and Creative Industries strategy for the town centre positions culture as the catalyst and connector for community and business life, supporting a wider strategy for positive economic and social growth for everyone invested in its future.

This Culture and Creative Industries Strategy sits within the Leisure and Cultural Strategy. Its role is to first acknowledge the holistic set of human and environmental capital that the town centre has to draw on, and then lay this out as an interconnected set of initiatives and proposals to enable cultural life in the town centre to flourish. It therefore has a role to join together numerous work streams across the councils' portfolio, whether community development, health and wellbeing, economic development, transport, the environment, and of course, culture itself.

As such this Culture and Creative Industries Strategy embraces a broad spectrum of what 'culture' is, from food to fashion, gardening to gaming, and public art to performance.

#### Audience

This strategy is intended for everyone connected to the future of the Town Centre, whether living, working, investing or visiting. The cultural life of our town centre must offer accessible opportunities for everyone to play a role in its evolution as a thriving town centre for the future.

As such, this strategy also highlights the importance of supporting both the presentation of culture (exhibitions, events, retail etc.) and the production of culture (designing, making, organising, funding, building). Both of these areas provide career pathways and employment opportunities for many of the borough's residents. They are all key to this strategy.



#### Structure

This strategy sets out a Cultural Vision for Basildon Town Centre, anchored with four Cultural Principles, activated by four Tactics, and implemented via 7 Focus Areas for delivery. The Strategy therefore sets out the destination for the Town Centre and the key opportunities.

The Cultural Principles are designed to focus resources, inform investment priorities, provide a value system, and support all future actions and deliverables.

The Tactics outline how culture will be integrated in the Town Centre, and using these approaches, the Focus Areas set out achievable and deliverable 'big ideas' that can focus resources and prioritise opportunities.

#### Beyond this strategy

This strategy gathers up recent work and moves it into a renewed vision and framework for the next decade. In 2018, Basildon Town Centre Management Company (BTCM) commissioned Futurecity to help look at the ways in which culture could kick start a rejuvenation of the town now, working with what was already in the town, and what was coming in the near future.

The BasildON report presented a plan and went further by commissioning Things Made Public (TMP) as a creative enterprise with a track record of working "on the ground" with cultural and town centre regeneration. TMP worked with Futurecity, BTCM and the local authority to translate BasildON into a live programme of cultural events and projects and present it as a funding application to Arts Council England (ACE). At the end of 2019, through its Creative People and Places programme, ACE awarded the proposal £1.2M funding, with matched support coming from BTCM and the local authority. Despite the pandemic, Creative Basildon have structured a robust set of projects over the next 3 years and a strategic governing body (Basildon Consortium) to oversee implementation. This work is live proof of the power of cultural activation, and the value of working with our communities.

This Culture and Creative Industries Strategy further develops the BasildON work into the forwardfacing framework for culture in the town centre and builds on its short-term power through a set of 8 Focus Areas that look beyond the next 3 years to the next 10-15. The Tactics outlined within this strategy demonstrate the approaches that will be used to continue a commitment to community engagement, embedding culture and the arts right at the heart of the town centre, and working with both public and private sector partners (councils, funding bodies, businesses, developers, cultural organisations) to leverage existing and future assets to all contribute to culture in the Town Centre in a multitude of forms.

## 02. INTRODUCTION

**The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy narrative for Basildon Town Centre, linking together heritage, location, community, culture, economic development, environment and regeneration.**

The future of Basildon begins with an understanding of what is happening elsewhere in the South East. The future is in creative industries, research, education and the knowledge sector. Around the M25 London boroughs, regional towns and cities are competing for a slice of this market; in Barking and Dagenham the 'Made in Dagenham' entity has attracted film and TV studios to the borough, Thurrock is expanding its 'High House Production Park' (home to the Royal Opera House's Production Workshop and Costume Centre) and in Southend the Business Investment District is investing in arts and culture to help the town define itself as cultural destination. In London, a growing number of people and businesses are leaving the capital to seek out and invest in smaller, original, authentic places in which to live and work. Globalisation has lost its appeal, yet multinationals like Amazon are changing our shopping habits, whilst the pandemic has ignited the debate about the real value of community and sparked the rise of those seeking a more purposeful life.



The need for belonging and identity is growing, and, in some towns, we could be anywhere and by the same logic, nowhere in particular. Towns are using a range of tools to develop their individuality and identity in order to differentiate themselves from their neighbours and competitors. In this regard Basildon has a lot to offer, its story is of a pioneering new town with a complex social history, a place that originally embraced the power of art, music and architecture in its focus on the future. The word 'pioneer' sometimes has negative connotations, but in the case of Basildon it describes accurately Basildon's spirit brought by the first wave of Basildonian's who left the East End and brought with them business-focused entrepreneurship, a sense of community, achievement and collaboration.

The arts can act as a catalyst and lens for Basildon's identity, encouraging a re-examination of Basildon's pioneering spirit and resetting it in the 21st century. For the purpose of this piece of work the Culture and Creative Industries Strategy does not attempt to cover every cultural and creative base, focusing on the regeneration and reimagining of the town centre. This is about a new future and a confident community proud to be part of Basildon's past, present and future. The strategy explores ways in which Basildon can develop its 'uniqueness' by using arts and culture as way of defining its originality and identity. In the theatre, this moment would be described as whether Basildon is a 'Receiving House', buying in ready-made culture from outside, or a 'Production House' generating its own cultural expression.

### Production house for creative tech

The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy outlines how Basildon can own some of the zeitgeist ideas being promoted in the southeast, framing Basildon as the first town in the South East to embrace Creative Innovation, a new town centre regenerated with the arts and culture at its heart, enlivening core placemaking themes of Digital Technology, Health and Wellbeing and Urban Green with a series of impactful landmark projects. Creative ideas bring nature, water and ecology into the town centre; the themes of clean-energy, circular economy and sustainability are supported by tangible strategies encouraging cycling, walking and electric powered vehicles.



A 'Cultural Cluster' established around the triangle of the new cinema, Towngate Theatre, main square, market and new FE College, uses film, theatre and digital technology as guiding principles, giving Basildon a leading role in the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, a significant programme designed to unite East London, the North Kent Coast and South Essex to create a world-class centre for creative and cultural production. The Production Corridor aims to create the necessary context for the Thames Estuary to become the home of global leadership in creative innovation, creating new jobs, developing local talent and supporting the rapid growth of the creative economy. A strategic vision for Basildon that provides the creative impetus for the large businesses and companies that surround the town to turn and face inwards to collaborate with the council on developing creative industries, co-working, research, and resident and visitor experiences around creative tech is one that will ensure Basildon continues to thrive as a pioneering place.



### Software over hardware

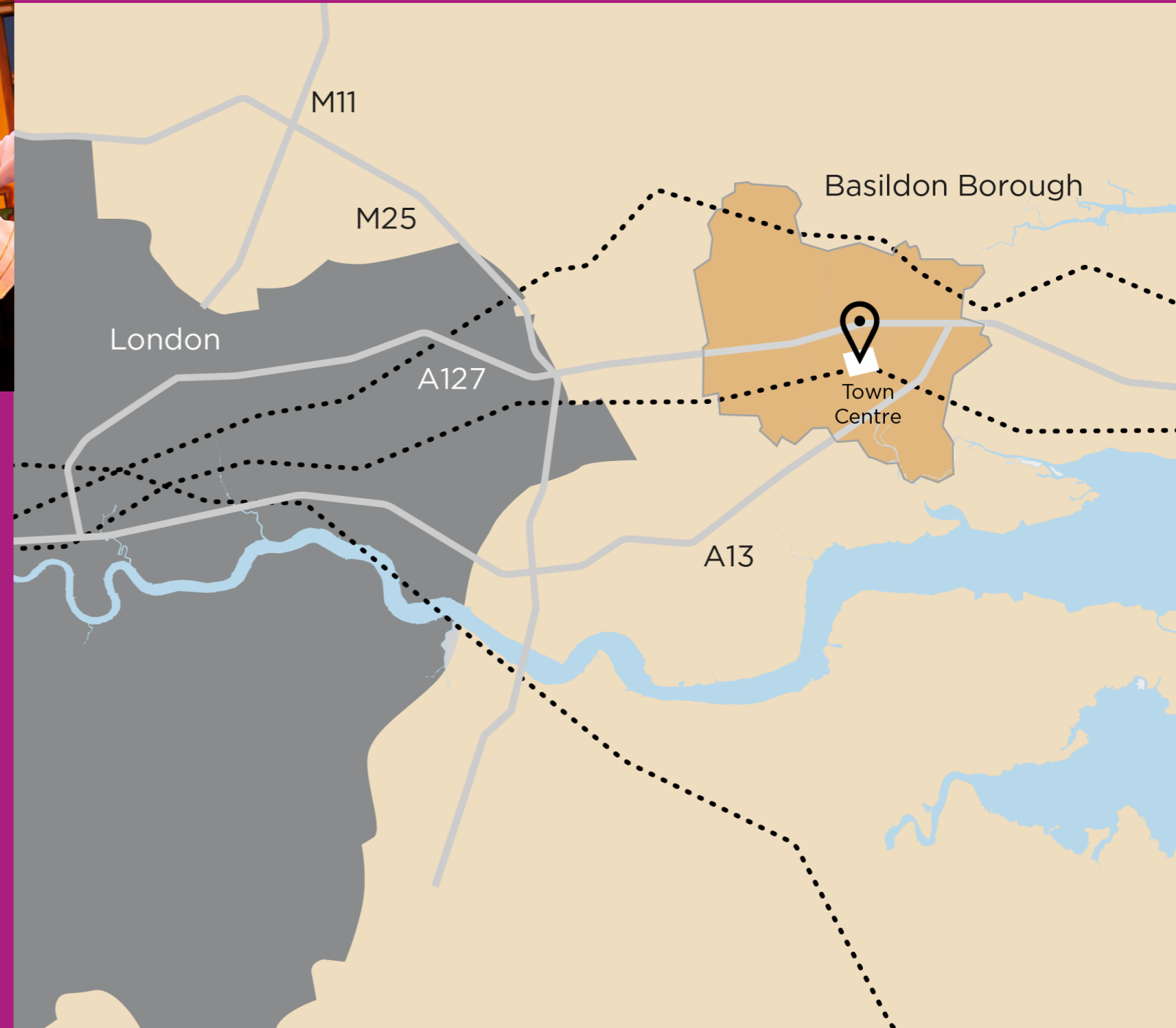
Basildon can learn from the success of other big towns and small cities where the cultural and creative industries have influenced positive change, driven debate and shaped the look and feel of public space. The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy has to be about art but also attitude. As part of its reimagining of Basildon's 2023 Town Centre Vision it rightly identifies the Town Centre as a mixed-use neighbourhood of the future. But if Basildon is to achieve a modern live-work-play environment, it will need to allow the arts to influence big decisions, to have a role and influence that challenges the traditional reliance on a 'Hardware' approach to regeneration i.e. new but characterless buildings, faceless infrastructure, cut and paste landscape design, badly funded public art and street furniture found in countless streets and squares.

Basildon must adopt a 'Software' approach of collaboration and partnership, taking seriously creative ideas, seeking original expression and supporting and nurturing Basildon's artistic and creative community. The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy will have an impact if the arts have equal representation in regard to the big issues (good and bad) affecting the town. It will work by understanding the creative potential of its parks, buildings, plazas, neighbourhoods, streets, markets, campuses and public buildings; by creating the conditions for cultural, social, academic, environmental and economic partnerships; and by rethinking the procurement of everything that provides Basildon with its identity, working closely with the property sector so that the houses, factories, businesses, streets, squares, leisure facilities, bridges, roads, cycle lanes and parks are worthy of designs that are original and attractive but also functional and cost-effective. This approach may seem radical, but it is happening all around us.

### Thames estuary production corridor

By positioning Basildon as the Creative tech town in the Thames Production corridor, this Culture and Creative Industries Strategy promotes the town as a joined up creative centre. The Production Corridor initiative aims to build on the estuary's manufacturing legacy; this ambitious programme is developing a series of large scale, state-of-the-art creative and cultural production centres, creating opportunities for strategic skills programmes and putting local talent at its heart.

Research shows that the Thames Estuary Production Corridor has the potential to create 50,000 jobs and generate £3.7bn for the UK economy, becoming the UK's largest concentration of creative production. Basildon should play an important role in the initiative, which focuses on the South East's social and economic recovery after COVID-19. To contribute to longer-term growth through investment in culture and the creative industries, helping create thousands of jobs, building world-class cultural infrastructure and developing local skills opportunities that will be crucial to deliver sustainable and equitable growth. The Thames Estuary Production Corridor has already unlocked over £4.6million investment from central government, including £4.3 million for the Creative Estuary programme.



### Inclusive Culture-led Regeneration

If Basildon is to grow, thrive and compete then the Culture and Creative Industries Strategy must address the aspirations and needs of all of the town's stakeholders, the council, existing and future residents, retailers, the wider business community and the town's future investors. The strategy is therefore focused on using culture as a powerful tool for the regeneration of the Town Centre. This is not about 'art for art's sake'; we are in a period of massive change, and now is the time to be radical. If Basildon is to succeed in our post Covid world, it has to embrace change, to own a big idea, and embrace a narrative and vision which differentiates it from its competitors.

The regeneration of Basildon Town Centre is vital to its future and must offer an environment that can attract the economic investment needed to rekindle Basildon's original pioneering spirit, but in new way that makes its citizens the owners and participants in its future. There is an exciting opportunity to bring creative and commercial innovation to the forefront, building bridges between industry, technology and the creative communities. The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy supports Basildon's vision to become competitor and leader to emulate the success of other towns and cities where the cultural and creative industries have influenced positive changes, driven debate and shaped the use of public space. In that spirit, we would invite Basildon residents, workers, and visitors and the businesses, educators and public sector organisation to participate in a cultural vision for Basildon, alongside entrepreneurs and creative thinkers to generate a home to for new ideas, products and experiences.

### Basildon: Creative Tech Town

These drivers coalesce into an ambitious vision of Basildon as the South East's first Creative Tech Town; a town with a pioneering spirit renewing itself for an era of digital innovation rooted in community, green and sustainable living concepts that are embedded in all aspects of the town's regeneration planning – from urban development, to education, planning and business support. A beacon of inclusive, confident creativity, Basildon will champion sustainable and purposeful living, via creative tech and enterprise. It will become a destination for accessible culture, where meaningful experiences and innovative solutions create social value for all its users, serving the wider borough community and supporting South Essex's economy. Residents and visitors will interact to cocreate an evolving town centre that will prioritise individual and social health and wellbeing via green living priorities coupled with ambitious creative tech ingenuity.

## 03. SETTING THE CONTEXT

### Driver 01 Global Trends: The Smart City & Sustainability

The arrival of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals for positive growth in 2015, provided a catalyst in bringing together 28 countries around the world (of which the UK is a signatory) in a pledge to redesign the global economy, manufacturing, commerce and investment, to ensure output and 'productivity'.

**“Sustainability”, “Green Energy” and “Social Value” have emerged as the key buzzwords in the world of macroeconomics in discussions about the future of our global economy.**

British explorer and activist Dame Ellen MacArthur has been a key voice in this global conversation about investment and manufacturing is the explorer and activist. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation has been an influential disruptor, lobbying governments and big businesses to embrace the concept of the circular economy and the philosophy that “waste is a design flaw”. This call to arms for a 'redesign' and global rethink has contributed to the acceleration in investment into regenerative agriculture, biophilia, biotech and sustainable products and materials.

Growing awareness of the impact of the climate crisis, exacerbated by a global economy over-reliant on fossil fuels, has accelerated the race to innovating a new system, a circular economy that delivers positive economic growth, without being a detrimental to humans or the environment. Smart cities have since been celebrated as possible solution in the drive to integrate town planning and placemaking into this vision for 2030. Goal 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities Goal 12: Responsible Consumption & Production and Goal 13: Climate Action have enabled investors, policy makers, local councils and businesses to align their efforts in delivering on these particular goals.



### Definition of a smart city

“An intelligent city is one that promotes a high-quality environment in which its citizens can live, work and play. This can include planning development in areas that are struggling in economic and social terms...Technology is also an important tool that can aid processes to streamline a cities individuality. The management of a city's physical space – which is essential to a high quality of life – is furthered through smart city technologies.” (Financial Times, 2020)

With its great connectivity, proximity to London and only 4 miles from the DP World's Gateway Port, Basildon has a unique advantage. Basildon has a heritage as a new town, a product of a bold and ambitious post-War vision for democratised living, powered by community – and supported by the arrival of advanced manufacturing and research companies. This legacy of innovation and connectivity gives Basildon the potential to be an economically resilient, globally competitive, outward facing town with all the cultural assets needed to attract foreign direct investment – ensuring the UK has a sustainable manufacturing and innovative hub.

### Driver 02 UK Economy & the South East's creative potential

The creative industries are now growing at a rate five times faster than the UK average, with an estimated value of £11.7bn per annum and a 60.5% increase from 2020-2019 (DCMS, 2020). London's heritage as a world-class capital of design, culture and creativity has supported the city's growth as a global hub for technology, with creativetech emerging as a hybrid of the creative and digital sectors combining. London's creative energy is moving east, and this is now captured in the Thames Estuary Production Corridor programme. Basildon's position along the Thames Estuary ('Europe's largest creative corridor') cannot be ignored. As a centre for digital, tech and creativity, Basildon plays a key role in shaping the cultural narrative for the future of this production corridor.



The Thames Estuary Production Corridor is a significant new programme to unite east London, the North Kent Coast and South Essex to create a worldclass centre for creative and cultural production: leading global innovation, creating new jobs, developing local talent and supporting the rapid growth of the creative economy.

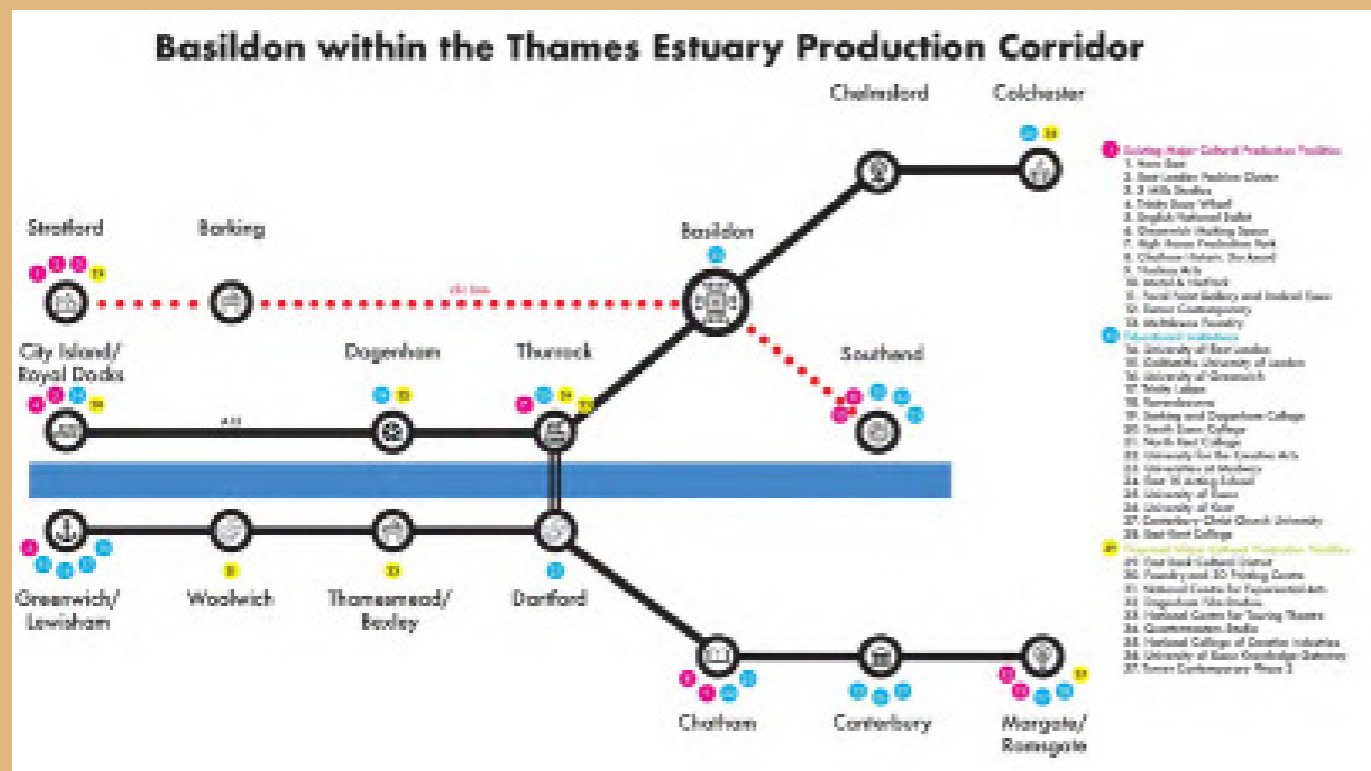
The bold industrial vision was launched by the Mayor of London in 2017 in partnership with the London Economic Action Partnership, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (South East LEP) and the South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN).

Building on the area's manufacturing legacy, this ambitious programme is developing a series of large scale, state-of-the-art creative and cultural production centres across the Estuary, creating opportunities for strategic skills programmes and putting local talent at its heart. Research shows that the Thames Estuary Production Corridor has the potential to create 50,000 jobs and generate £3.7bn for the UK economy, becoming the UK's largest concentration of creative production.

The potential of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor has already unlocked over £4.6million investment from central government into the Estuary, including £4.3 million for the Creative Estuary programme using culture as the catalyst for growth. The Thames Estuary Production Corridor will now play a crucial role in London and the South East's social and economic recovery after COVID-19.

It will contribute to longer-term growth through forward-thinking investment in culture and the creative industries, helping create thousands of jobs in a time of need, building world-class cultural infrastructure and developing local skills opportunities that will be crucial to deliver sustainable and equitable growth.

Source: <https://london.gov.uk>



**Driver 03 Basildon Borough's strengths and assets**

**Economic Powerhouse**

Basildon is the biggest contributor of economic growth in Essex with more than 7,500 businesses in Basildon employing 82,000 people, and new startups increasing faster than anywhere else in Essex. A significant number of these have particular strengths in the Digital, Creative and ICT sector and the Advanced Manufacturing sector. Essex is also the 8th largest economy in the UK and home to 663,000 jobs. In 2013, they generated Gross Value Added of £32.5 billion to the UK's economy. With a population of 1.4 million people, Essex is forecast to attract a further 300,000 to live in the area within the next 25 years: which means Basildon's vision for its future will have a central role in the growth of this economic hub.

Statistics source: Basildon District Profile



With the £30 million investment into the new South Essex College campus in the heart of the town centre, Basildon will now have the educational facilities to host a student population of up to 2,000. With specialised courses in mobile app development, ICT systems computer games design and creative media animation, this new campus will provide an attractive talent pool to businesses within the STEM industries looking to invest or relocate to Basildon.

Between 2015-2016 33% of sixth formers left with qualifications in mathematics and science, social sciences, languages, literature and business admin were the second and third most popular qualifications amongst sixth formers, further illustrating the extent to which Basildon has a student population with skills that are suited to the STEM industries but also valued by tech start-ups.

Basildon's SEC's Luckyn Lane campus is also designed to up-skill young workers and replenish the aging workforce, producing technical engineers, and software designers taught by industry experts and professionals from within the trade.



### Green Environment

Approximately 63% of Basildon is still rural, with some of the UK's most important marsh and woodlands. Norsey Woods, is one of the UK's few ancient managed woodlands, Wat Tyler Country Park is home to one of Basildon's most biodiverse and popular cultural venues. Equally, the South Essex Marshes has the potential to become the borough's 'green lung'.

### Green Mobility

Basildon's connectivity and public transport links also supports the town's ability to transition towards greener more sustainable methods of travel. The number of SMEs moving into Essex is almost double the national average. These new disruptive firms are supplying crucial green infrastructure. Hangar19 for example opened an office in Billericay in 2017. This firm delivers sustainable transport solutions, focusing on electric vehicles, charging points, short term car hire and bike hire.



Basildon owns the heritage of being one of the world's first successful examples of a 'smart city', home to skilled workers, research and development facilities, and innovative manufacturing. This legacy is fuelled by creative energy and innovative design.

The Ford Dunton site and its 50+ year history is a prime example. Home to one of the first electric cars (1967), industrial recycling plants (1995) and environmentally friendly vehicle tech centres, Ford's long-term commitment and investment in Basildon, illustrates the unique offering the town provides to forward thinking manufacturers that they cannot find anywhere else in the world.

Basildon is also home to other innovators such as New Holland Agriculture, who are currently in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for firms pushing towards low carbon, green energy – again, Basildon isn't just a hub for manufacturing vehicles, it is home to the world's leading 'Clean Energy' firms – placing the town, once more at the forefront of cutting-edge technical innovation. Other innovative tech firms local to Basildon include Oakley VR, Leonardo and Musto, all leaders in their respective fields. With exceptional educational facilities within the borough, servicing the STEM sectors, and a 50+ year precedent of being home to advanced manufacturing businesses, Basildon has the potential to create its own tech epicentre supporting both SMEs and global scale businesses.

Within this Basildon Town Centre can be the central innovation hub, housing incubators for school leavers and budding entrepreneurs, accelerators for existing businesses and co-working space for the town's artisans, inventors and creatives. The new cinema, an Towngate Theatre and Arts Council funding will all serve to inject new cultural energy into the future of Basildon town centre. Local residents and stakeholders are invited to re-imagine and redraw their vision for Basildon's identity.



Basildon has a strong presence of hightech employment with 33% of Essex's advanced manufacturing jobs (6,160). Creative industries have doubled in size in Basildon between 2009 and 2015. The creative industry sector is more specialised than anywhere else in Essex and is growing faster in Basildon than Cambridge and London with a quarter of Essex's creative jobs based in the Borough.

Basildon Economic Development Policy, July 2017

**Driver 04 Basildon Town Centre Regeneration**

The town centre is a canvas on which to develop cultural infrastructure and services as part of its future. Recent big projects are bringing 'new and improved' anchor organisations/projects around trade (new market), learning (new college), and entertainment (new cinema). These create a strong backbone around which to seed smaller strategic initiatives over the short to medium term, distributed across the town centres public realm and commercial spaces.

Currently, the town centre is predominantly a cluster of commercial spaces and supporting infrastructure (pedestrianised public realm, car parking, bus and rail stations). The three storey Eastgate Shopping Centre is the central retail offer with over 100 stores, surrounded by blocks providing outdoor public realm facing ground floor retail spaces with office space above. But the physical fabric is only half of the equation.

The social fabric of the borough and town centre must be addressed if culture is to be at the heart of regeneration. Recent socio-economic challenges across the borough include:

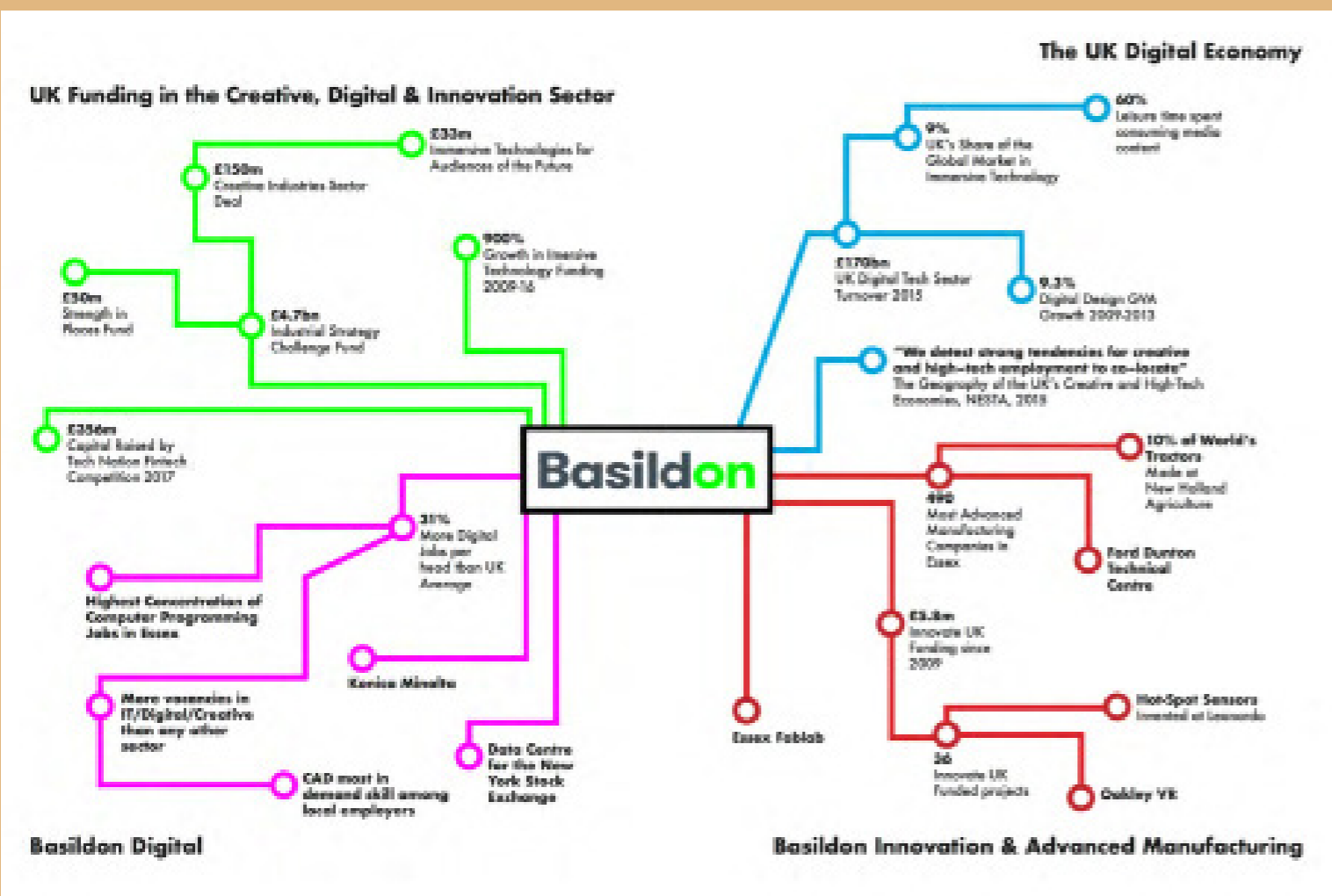
- 12 Basildon areas are in UK's 10% Least Deprived
- 10 Basildon areas fall in UK's 10% Most Deprived
- 23% Adults with no qualifications
- 47% Secondary Pupils want to go to University
- 26% Feel they don't belong in their neighbourhood
- 65% Voter turnout vs 68.8% nationally

Sources: Local Plan / Corporate Plan / Community Strategy 2012-2036

**The aims of the Basildon Town Centre Vision**

1. We want things to do
2. We want a green town centre
3. We want a connected town centre

The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy provides focus and guidance to support strategic negotiations with all urban development projects coming forward in the town centre within the remit of the Basildon Town Centre Vision At the time of writing, planning applications for Eastgate, Basildon Town Square and Basildon Market Square have been lodged, and the Culture and Creative Industries Strategy will support officers to review the proposals' abilities to support culture in the future town centre.





### Driver 05 Basildon Town Centre: The New Paradigm for Disruptive Retail

50% of small business owners say if everyone in their community spent £5 extra per week, it would help them keep their doors open in the long run.

£1 spent in your neighbourhood is worth 400% more to the local economy than £1 spent out of it. Independents have an outsized impact in the areas they serve. If they thrive, we all thrive. It's time government support reflects that. — #SaveTheStreet Appear Here (December 2020)

As the UK High Street endures an existential crisis – well underway before the global pandemic of COVID-19, Basildon emerged within the narrative as 'canary in the mine'. The flagship, visionary 'New Town' was intended during the 1960s to be a paradigm for the future of UK retail and town planning. Five years ago Marks & Spencer's left the town centre. In 2005, Alders went bust. The retail paradigm was broken – the model has long been in need of a revolution, a complete redesign to fit the needs and expectations of 21st Century living, and the evolving, fast pace growth of digital, e-commerce and tech.

Covid19, with all its challenges has forced a cultural reset that few can ignore. First and foremost is the pivot away from big cities, towards town centres, village centres, local, independent shops and a renewed focus and appreciation for the security and safety of community led enterprise. The evolution of the 15-minute city has gathered momentum in town planning under the shadow of the pandemic. Local councils and employers can ill afford to have their economies held to ransom by poor infrastructure and a public transport system ill-equipped to control the spread of any virus. From Milan to Glasgow mayors and town planners are exploring how a new 'walkable' model for the future of placemaking, will also deliver increased footfall into town centres as citizens begin to redefine their lifestyle patterns to either work from home (or closer to home) and endeavour to shop locally, with local businesses they know and trust.

This dramatic pivot away from long commutes, big retail chains, big department stores and out of town retail parks, ushers in a new era: the Renaissance of the Town Centre. As the original New Town paradigm for modern living and retail, Basildon once more, has the opportunity to take centre stage in blazing a trail in building a new paradigm, one that works for its residents and local businesses, that integrates its DNA of innovation, creativity and technology.

Our Culture and Creative Industries Strategy is underpinned by its principles, nurturing homegrown talent is one of them. The answer to the future of retail in Basildon, will be found within Basildon. By investing in the infrastructure needed to support the concept of a ‘creative-tech town’ programmed with cocreation, community led social enterprises, offers a new more sustainable model that enables local creative entrepreneurs the platform and opportunity to design and develop services and products that are bespoke and in direct dialogue with the needs of the town.

**“Mr. Bailey (founder of Appear Here) talks of “shops as media” and points out that successful “omni channel retailers” have found that online engagement is typically much higher in areas where they have physical stores.”**

— (The Future of Cities, Financial Times, November 2020)

In the FT’s Special Report on retail, the key takeaway is that the future of retail is not under threat from the arrival of e-commerce. The younger generation of consumers do not wish to choose digital over physical space, but gravitate to a hybrid of both.



### Experiential retail is the future

Recent studies by PwC show that the most popular key word search terms have included phrases such as ‘sustainable’, ‘ethical’, ‘cruelty-free’ and ‘low carbon’ as younger generation climate conscious consumers search for products and brands that align with their values (PwC, 2019). The upsurge in wellness and mental health, has led the UK wellness industry to grow rapidly in 2017 it was estimated to be worth £22.6 billion (Wellness Institute, 2017). Meanwhile FT Wealth (2019) produced an in-depth study on the shift in investment portfolios amongst younger generations in contrast to their parent’s generation. Consumer and Investment trends driven by younger generations all point towards a pivot towards ‘Purposeful Living’. For the UK retail sector, this translates as experiential: across AR/VR and creative-tech but also in rentals – as the drive towards a circular economy and circular product design gathers momentum.

### Driver 06 Culture in the Town Centre today

Despite the challenges over the last 50 years to retain and nurture cultural production and presentation in the town centre, there is currently a range of spaces and organisations creating and presenting the cultural life of the town and borough in a number of ways.

**MEDIA ARTS** - Gateway 97.8fm is Basildon’s award-winning local community radio station based within Eastgate Centre and is a strong advocate for local talent and projects.

**PERFORMING ARTS** - Represented by venues such as the Towngate Theatre and The Edge, whilst projects in the community include TIME (Therapy In Musical Expression) and La Danse Fantastique.

**VISUAL ARTS** - Whilst there is currently no large-scale venue for visual arts, there is a strong network of visual artists in all artforms across the borough, and Basildon Eastgate Art Gallery in the town centre offers a platform for exhibition.

**APPLIED ARTS** - This has been serviced by The Craft Shed, an accessible space in the town centre to work with pottery and craft.

**HERITAGE** - The town and borough is kept alive by many, including Basildon Heritage.

**FILM** - New Town Utopia by Christopher Ian Smith received critical acclaim for its portrayal of the town centre.

**LITERATURE** - The town’s library provides a crucial service.

**DIGITAL ARTS** - Our libraries are complimented by The Creator Space – a digital arts ‘fablab’ facility for 3D printing and other creative-tech workshops and activities. Meanwhile, the Basildon Writers Group supports writers of all levels across the borough.

These grass roots facilities and projects are connected by several networking and support projects such as Directions-Bas, and Bas-Arts-Index, the latter providing a range of services to support local creatives including an online directory, noticeboard, newsletters, local social meet ups, open crit sessions, film club and music playlist project. These initiatives enable connection between a wider diaspora of businesses, groups and individuals that have contributed to Basildon’s creative industry growth over the last decade.

As part of our vision for culture in the future town centre, the objective will be to support continued growth of individuals and projects such as these, but leveraged through more ambitious opportunities and partnerships, both with expanded public sector support, but crucially with the wider creative tech and innovation companies across the private sector. Together, Basildon town centre can set a bold and broad cultural vision for the future.

## 04. VISION

### Essex's Creative Tech Town

**A beacon of confident and inclusive creativity, championing sustainable and purposeful living, via digital innovation and enterprise.**

A destination for accessible culture, where meaningful experiences and innovative solutions create social value for all its users, serving the wider borough's community and supporting South Essex's economy. Residents and visitors will interact to co-create an evolving town centre that will prioritise individual and social health and wellbeing via green living priorities coupled with creative tech ingenuity.



In Futurecity's 2018 report 'BasildON', it made the case for Basildon to consider the idea of a Tech Town as the kind of landmark future vision that would attract inward investment as well as unite local residents in support of a strategy that would put community prosperity (both wellbeing and economic) at its heart. A Basildon that offers individuals and businesses the creative location, conditions and tangible evidence of a potential tech-cluster that could evolve and thrive with the full support of the town's leaders and residents. The work attracted the Arts Council's first investment in Basildon for 70 years. This early success has now evolved into Basildon as a 'Creative Tech Town' a pioneering place, focusing on culture and creativity to help create a new identity.

Creative Tech is a growing area of influence, stemming from the change in behaviour by consumers who are looking for new experiences that they can share. As such, the creative technology field is growing exponentially. Creative technology examples can be found in most creative focused businesses including retail, fashion, communications, film, and TV, performing arts, advertising and entertainment. Creative technologies have also become part of the UK's mainstream industrial base, from car manufacturers, banking and finance to the health sector, transport, logistics and the food industry. Creative tech is now used to imagine the future, taking on practical roles to help us drive, shop, cook, heal, consume, and more.

The idea for a focus on a Creative Tech cluster approach to the town would group businesses, individuals and organisations in commercial spaces of the town centre. Given the growth of the experiential economy, the change in shopping habits and the current impact of Covid-19 on the high street, it is a good time to rethink the purpose of some of the commercial spaces in the town centre. Shops and office space might be re-imagined as incubators for start-ups, business incubators, co-working space, creative industries, artist and design studios, production space, black box space and places for community activity.

Basildon is surrounded by and connected to businesses that use the Creative Industries and Creative Tech and it is particularly relevant to the town centres present and future retail offer. We now use the internet to make most of our decisions on purchase and price, and in response we have moved to the Experience Economy when it comes to physical retail. This is about experiencing something memorable and personalised that creates a deeper relationship and loyalty. This type of experience, crafted to the needs and interests of the person, is no longer just about saving time or great customer service; it is about time well spent and experiences that are personal and memorable. This change in behaviour is important for Basildon, which has a large retail sector. Retailers, brands, businesses and consumers are increasingly looking for places that offer a welcoming interesting and varied environment, that can change and adapt, that offer temporary events and activity where businesses can operate inside and outside their premises. When the Experiential Economy is brought together with the world of Creative Tech, environments can be created that transport audiences into real and digital experiences; Basildon can offer a testing ground for brands and businesses to explore this kind of experiential marketing, pioneering large immersive exhibits designed to wow audiences because the city provides clusters for innovators to experiment together.

Basildon can develop a fledgling ecosystem of creative industries, creative practitioners and cultural organisations within a walkable area in the town centre. Support and investment can define a cluster grown around Theatre, Film and Retail., supported through the provision of high-quality public realm interventions, signage, wayfinding and mapping. This ecosystem offers opportunities for a joined-up approach to establishing occupancy based on related trades, skills and products, one that frames and nurtures creative talent and sets out opportunities for future investment in cultural infrastructure. There is a need to encourage creative entrepreneurs and creative industries by investing in cultural events and streetlevel initiatives. In return for this investment, these creative clusters can realise cultural and business partnerships as well as create arts and consumer events that drive up visitor numbers to Basildon.

### Green Living

There's an overall trend towards environmentalism across all sectors. Whether this means restaurants banning plastic straws, a transition to clean energy sources, or purchasing carbon offsets, society as a whole has witnessed a rise in sustainability. Recently, green technology has become increasingly popular. Green Tech refers to the use of technology that is considered environmentally friendly, based on its production process, supply chain or production. Green Tech has also become a burgeoning industry that's attracting enormous amounts of investment capital. Examples include LED Lighting, Solar Panels, Wind Energy, Composting, Electric Vehicles, Programmable Thermostats and Vertical Farming

### Urban Green Living

The 'green and blue' area surrounding Basildon, offers a rich ecosystem of flora and fauna, farms and agriculture, thriving wildlife, landscapes and the spectacular Thames Estuary. In terms of Basildon's identity, it is an underused asset and could provide a rich seam of original ideas for the new Town Centre. Urban Green takes a unique approach by connecting people through nature, to create vibrant places, which are productive, meaningful and imaginative, platforms for collaboration, experimentation and creative innovation.

This reinforces the idea of Basildon as a 'campus style' centre, a new creative neighbourhood. The idea of 'greenness' could be extended from nature to health and wellbeing and technology. Basildon as a green lung, with innovative new social, cultural and economic models for sustainable green spaces, public space for urban allotments and ambitious new urban growing.

Concepts that bring together food, farming, arts and culture. URBAN GREEN offers artists and the cultural sector huge opportunities to be involved in exploring the themes through both public realm projects such as signage and wayfinding, public art, and the co-creation of gardens, benches, tables and chairs, to public engagement projects such as creative direction and production, project delivery, strategic partnership building, community engagement, original programming, curation and live events.

URBAN GREEN takes an intelligent position that reinforces the Creative Tech Town idea joining up investment, persuading businesses and the community to be green, pioneering new methodologies in the creative use of underutilised land and 'meanwhile' spaces to engage local communities. Several big themes emerge from an Urban Green philosophy:

1. **CIRCULAR LIVING** offers Basildon a position on waste and recycling, and the use of energy saving devices. It also offers the town a position on meaningful and sustainable employment, career pathways and opportunities within an economy that supports itself.

2. **HEALTHY MOBILITY** The idea of cycling and non-car transport could be encouraged and connectivity through technology to encourage live-work, home working and a work friendly public realm. Research links to professional bodies, universities and connected industries would offer innovative ideas on a healthy town from running, walking and cycling to yoga, live events and social interaction.

3. **BIOPHILIC LIVING** is the love of living things, what makes us human. It's about our positive mental and physical health through an alignment with the natural world and all its health benefits. The town's proximity to Basildon Hospital and its health workers offers other ideas around health and wellbeing and the quality of life in the centre, such as the design of pockets of small, strategic public and private spaces with garden themes, where workers and residents encounter nature where they might least expect it. Biophilic living could offer a radical new purposeful approach to living and working in the town, providing affordable new homes and workspaces alongside links to farming, agriculture and growing and food production.

### Urban green living for Essex

Drawing on these macro trends of climate sustainability and tech, and the desire for wellbeing in work and life, Basildon will lead the South East in creating an Urban Green Living strategy Basildon will encourage new businesses to build on the existing portfolio of Green Tech companies already rooted in the area, making the town a hub for innovative digital green innovation Basildon will deploy this knowledge base, connected into university and public sector R&D, in creating cutting edge approaches to recycling, clean air, water and energy planning, in a development master plan that prioritises urban wellbeing.

## 05. CULTURAL PRINCIPLES

### Guiding the Vision

To achieve the Town Centre's Cultural Vision, the Cultural Principles are the anchors to guide behaviour and evaluation. They represent the core values to help Basildon Council and its town centre and borough partners strategically embed cultural initiatives throughout the town centre and engage a diverse range of collaborators across the community.

All initiatives and projects that are badged as Basildon Town Centre Culture Projects will work to these Principles. Those organising cultural initiatives will be encouraged to use the Principles when reporting back, as tools to objectively evaluate objectives and open up opportunities.

Drawing from 'setting the context', our Town Centre Cultural Principles reflect the unique context and opportunity that Basildon brings to culture through its residents, businesses and partners.

### HOMEGROWN - PRODUCE INCLUSIVE & CO-CREATED CULTURE

Basildon Town Centre will reflect the borough's important history of creativity and collaboration. It will provide participation and co-creation opportunities for the town's diverse communities, through culture, skills & training, and strategic partnerships. Through architecture, landscape and embedded arts, Basildon will use culture as a catalyst to accelerate local social enterprise and business growth, exploring opportunities to test ideas, reach new audiences and grow. Supporting Basildon's homegrown talent will deliver both social and economic value, for the long-term delivering positive and inclusive growth.

### PIONEERING - CHAMPION CREATIVITY AND EXPERIMENTATION

Basildon owns the heritage of being one of the world's first successful examples of a 'smart city', home to skilled workers, research, design and manufacturing industries, set within a generous public realm of green spaces and network of walking and vehicular routes. This legacy is of creative energy and innovative design sets the precedent for a new bold, visionary and ambitious cultural and economic strategy, that aligns the town's heritage in tech and innovation, with its future as a creative-tech hub and home to the UK's next gen talent in the creative industries and technology.

### CREATIVE TECH - MAKE DIGITAL A JOY FOR EVERYONE

Basildon will be a home for cutting edge digital creativity – business, education, community and recreation. Housing the needs of the future of work and learning, platforming and presenting cultural and commercial innovation, and maximising a relationship with data to help people thrive in their town. By creating a digital masterplan for the town, Basildon will be able to maximise the potential to champion local creativetech businesses and innovate the integration of hardware and software into public realm design for local residents.

### URBAN GREEN - EMBRACE HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Basildon will fully embrace its green context. It will contain an inspirational set of green interventions, creative projects that pick up on the town's enthusiasm for food and leisure. events, cycling provision and cutting-edge sustainable technologies. With the rapid growth of the UK Bio-tech industry, ethical design, the circular economy and conservation in the UK, Basildon also has the potential to become a paradigm of a creative-tech town defined by nature, wellness and sustainable living.

## 06. TACTICS

### Putting culture at the heart

Basildon Town Centre's cultural offer should be boldly inclusive and relevant to everyone, whether everyday commuters, occasional visitors, A127 Corridor workers or lifelong communities. It should benefit from the diversity of experience, talent and values that these different people bring to the town centre. As such, this strategy will work to integrate culture via four key tactics:

**1. CO-CREATION** Cultural projects and programming can bring back the creative ingenuity of Basildon's borough-wide residents into the town centre. Creating opportunities for events, exhibitions, new creative projects, skills and training opportunities, intergenerational projects, music, art, craft, design, and literature will bring together diverse community members and organisations. We will work to co-create town centre culture with our communities.

**2. EMBEDDING ARTS & CULTURE** Basildon Town Centre needs to create its own unique cultural identity through an ambitious commissioning programme for every aspect of its public realm. An 'Embedded Arts' programme sees everything in the town as connected, offering unique opportunities for commissioning, collaboration and partnership, whether it be the architecture, infrastructure, public realm or the uncovering of cultural potential in other local assets and amenities. Culture can provide the catalyst for realising the individualism and identity of a neighbourhood and promote a greater attachment to place and the arts can provide highly creative ideas for interventions that can help to define a new place, with art and design briefs developed to provide real opportunities in the context of the social, political and cultural identity of the location.

This strategy advocates a new approach to commissioning cultural projects that enable artists, designers and their collaborators to present culture in all its forms, from visual art to craft, music, performance, food, sports and games.

The balance in any new community is between the hardware investment i.e., building and facilities and 'software' ideas focusing on content and activity. The latter might mean funding a town sports team, setting up regular community events, business partnerships or seasonal festivals. This investment can be incremental and relatively cost efficient but create collective memory and start traditions.

The strategy sets out a long-term vision for Basildon focused on developing a set of projects and partnerships for the residents designed to provide participation and inclusion and relevant to their circumstances and situation. Within the hardware of the Town Centre, artists and creatives will be commissioned and supported to work alongside traditional urban practitioners, with Basildon offering providing ambitious new opportunities to make work in a 'gallery without walls'. The strategy provides new ideas around co-creation and commissioning of architecture, public art, street furniture and landscape. There can be artist designed streetscapes, partnerships with festivals and cultural venues.

The arts and crafts can help create a unique identity for the town centre, from public art commissioned, signage and wayfinding, street furniture such as seating, lighting, awnings, ironwork, through to more strategic ideas linked to colour, pattern, materiality, digital platforms and networks, and collaboration on large architecture, infrastructure and landscape projects.

**3. CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE** Cultural Infrastructure is the buildings, structures, places and spaces where we produce or consume culture. In the town centre examples include The Towngate Theatre, Eastgate Art Gallery, The Craft Shed, Gateway 97.8fm, the Library and within it, The Creator Space. The Creative People and Places programme is building on these with a range of initiatives to unlock latent space in the town centre for cultural activity, with other assets such as the new cinema and the college. As noted in 'setting the scene', across the borough there is a network of creative industries, innovation businesses, and advanced manufacturing of all scales, from freelance individuals to large corporations. All have a role to play in the town centre being a platform to promote Basildon's unique role in the future of Essex. This strategy sets out a range of focus areas where cultural infrastructure can be built-on and integrated into the town centre. There is an opportunity for the town centre to embrace a mixed economy where creative workspaces, rehearsal spaces, artist studios, recording studios, incubation spaces for business start-ups, and industrial and light industrial units can be integrated into the fabric of town centre life, helping to complete a circular economy of cultural production and presentation, supporting skills, jobs, and economic value for residents, visitors and businesses.

**4. PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP** Building on the Arts Council funding, this strategy sets up a process of developing public and private sector partnership working to deliver culture. Emerging out of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, the regions creative industries have benefitted from the availability of EU funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supported SECCADS (South East Creative, Cultural And Digital Support). The programme was offered funding up until December 2020, and with workshops, events and internship support made available until May 2021. <https://www.southeastcreatives.co.uk/>

The key to further public sector support is to integrate the creative industries into the Creative Tech Town narrative, and pull together the cluster that encompasses the Digital, Creative and ICT, and the Advanced Manufacturing sector. This can strategically leverage support from across the innovation, business, and digital infrastructure sectors.

The other key tactic is private sector engagement. Culture-led placemaking depends on the private sector to champion the value of culture to economic development, skills and training, social cohesion and wellbeing.

As part of the town centre regeneration, a key role for this Culture and Creative Industries Strategy is the full engagement with both the developers delivering much of the built environment change, and the businesses and industries that can benefit from the mixed-use town centre being conceived and shaped as part of the new narrative for the town.

The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy's goal is to unlock our unique position in re-thinking the entire ground plan of our development proposals, embracing mixed economy uses that can fuse retail with cultural, community and business provision, often themselves mixed up in new combinations and formats of workspace and cultural presentation space.

The new developments within the town centre can also bring forward major opportunities for Embedding Arts & Culture physically within their architecture and public realm.

As such, all of the four tactics described above for putting culture at the heart of the town centre will work closely together with all stakeholders.

## 07. FOCUS AREAS

### Embedding culture throughout the town centre

Basildon Town Centre's physical and social fabric continually develops at pace. Cultural provision must be strategic, nimble, research driven, able to anticipate change, and help its communities continually thrive and feel empowered by their environment. Basildon Council must co-create the town centre with its residents and stakeholders, platforming an ever-evolving culture and lifestyle.

To do this, culture must operate as a curated initiative across the 'hardware' of physical space and place design, and the 'software' of community engagement, activation and communication. Only through this approach can residents, businesses, and visitors truly play a role in town centre life.

This strategy lays out 8 Key Focus Areas where cultural projects and activity will be targeted within the town centre as part of the Basildon Town Centre Vision for the town centre over the next decade.

#### The Focus Areas:

1. Creative Workspace – creative and cultural production space at all scales
2. Creative Presentation – culture and business collaborations
3. Business Partnership – culture and business collaborations
4. Education & Learning – culture and lifelong learning opportunities
5. Public Art – celebrating heritage and forging the future
6. Walk, Run, Play, Cycle – safe, healthy, fun access for all
7. Green Spine – a central route of sociable, healthy green spaces through the town centre

BasildON's Creative People and Places kick starts several of these Focus Areas through its cultural programme to re-activate the town centre, engaging the boroughs creative energy and spirit <https://creativebasildon.co.uk>





## 01 Creative Workspace

Creative and cultural production space at all scales

### WHAT

An embedded mix of spaces and venues throughout the town centre for creative and cultural production – from creative coworking, to start-up incubators, to design and making spaces and digital media production facilities.

### WHY

To ensure that the full circle of the cultural and creative innovation sector is included in the town centre, so that research, design and production of cultural are provided for equally, thereby supporting career pathways, skills, training and employment opportunities in the town.

### WHERE

Throughout the town centre: integrated into re-purposed existing non-residential premises, as well as developed as integral spaces within new development proposals coming forward as part of planning applications within the town centre.

### HOW

The local planning authority and advisors will work closely with property owners and developers to strategize the future mix of creative workspace, matching future trends, needs analysis, and strategic dialogue with business leaders and supporters.

## 02 Creative Presentation

Exhibition and event spaces and projects

### WHAT

A series of public realm and nonresidential spaces and projects to present culture in all its forms across the town centre. Focus will include social and performance spaces as part of new public realm design, and indoor spaces that can accommodate a range of scales of events and exhibition, from small empty retail units for pop-up immersive experiences, to longer term cultural spaces for cultural organisations to take residence in the town centre and showcase innovation and creativity alongside the larger assets such as the cinema and theatre.

### WHY

To make culture as accessible as possible, the town centre can leverage different types of cultural space for different audiences, seasons, times of the day, and types of creative activity. This will help animate the town centre throughout the week, month and year.

### WHERE

Throughout the town centre: integrated into re-purposed existing non-residential premises, as well as developed as integral spaces within new development proposals coming forward as part of planning applications within the town centre.

### HOW

The local planning authority and advisors will work closely with public realm and architectural design teams, property owners and developers to strategize the future mix of cultural presentation space, matching future trends, needs analysis, and strategic dialogue with cultural organisations and communities.

## 03 Business Partnership

Culture and business collaborations

### WHAT

A programme of commissions, thought leadership, training and events to encourage and support Basildon's businesses to embrace culture and creative practice. Projects could include Artist-in-Residences within businesses, artwork commissions for business branding and communications, staff engagement programmes working with artists of all forms, and the creative tech sector themselves presenting and performing their wares in the town centre through collaborations with artists and the cultural sector.

### WHY

To add economic and social value to local businesses, increase the employment and commissioning opportunities for artists and creative start-ups, platform and present the creative tech ingenuity across the borough, and enabled Basildon to lead the way in the intersection of Arts & Business.

### WHERE

Throughout the town centre, identifying the “hardware” of vacant spaces and strategic presentation platforms through the changing town centre, whilst nurturing the “software” of collaborative relationships between businesses and the cultural sector to create content.

### HOW

Forming a business partnerships forum for the town centre, where business can learn about the opportunities and value of cultural collaboration, and work with the local planning authority and other partners to test projects and grow relationships.

## 04 Education & Learning

Culture and lifelong learning opportunities

### WHAT

A programme of commissions, thought leadership, training and events to encourage and support Basildon's businesses to embrace culture and creative practice. Projects could include Artist-in-Residences within businesses, artwork commissions for business branding and communications, staff engagement programmes working with artists of all forms, and the creative tech sector themselves presenting and performing their wares in the town centre through collaborations with artists and the cultural sector.

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### WHERE

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### HOW

Forming a business partnerships forum for the town centre, where business can learn about the opportunities and value of cultural collaboration, and work with the local planning authority and other partners to test projects and grow relationships.

## 05 Public Art

Celebrating heritage and forging the future

### WHAT

A delivery plan and programme for preserving existing, and commissioning new, public art as embedded elements within the town centre's upgraded public realm and infrastructure. Potential projects will embed art as architecture, seating, wayfinding, lighting, hard surfacing, soft landscaping, play space and furniture, stand-alone public art, interactive, immersive, and temporary such as projection or building wraps. A combination of temporary and permanent projects.

### WHY

To ensure that public realm spaces and routes are designed and delivered by artists and designers working with the community so as to create meaningful places that support physical and mental wellbeing and inspire all the town's users through creativity and innovation. They lay the groundwork for the other artistic interventions developed in their wake.

### WHERE

Multiple sites across the town centre, including local authority and developer owned land and projects.

### HOW

At the appropriate time, a Delivery Plan will be drawn up, aligned with the Basildon Town Centre Vision to identify the locations and projects to be brought forward across different time scales. Projects will be fully integrated within the overall public realm programme - commissions for artists and designers to work with urban design teams, communities and stakeholders will be explored.

## 06 Walk, Run, Play, Cycle

Safe, healthy, fun access for all

### WHAT

A full range of walking, running and cycling initiatives across public realm, infrastructure, retail, and community amenities: safe routes, fitness and experience trails, apps, maps and audio experiences, clubs and training programmes.

### WHY

To creatively integrate these fast-growing sustainable urban mobility trends into the town centre, and enable it to be the borough's accessible hub for fitness and recreation.

### WHERE

Strategic routes around and through the town centre, couple with pocket parks and dwell spaces for respite and recreation. Street furniture and landscaping projects with artists and communities at their core. Technology projects leveraging sports tech and navigational platforms to aid mobility, wayfinding and fitness.

### HOW

Short term initiatives such as pop-up sports and recreation hubs (running, cycling etc.) from which training, equipment repair and events can be organised, leading to longer term route improvements, and public realm design.

## 07 Green Spine

A central route of sociable, healthy green spaces through the town centre

The Culture and Creative Industries Strategy and the Leisure and Cultural Strategy share a principle of greening the future town centre in an imaginative, meaningful and sustainable way. With a jigsaw of spaces, routes and building sites coming forward for improvement over the next decade, there is an opportunity to champion green space as a big component of the future town centre experience. The proposal is to develop an embedded art, cultural and design approach to connecting up disparate public space via a GREEN SPINE that weaves its way through the town centre, linking up key cultural nodes and experiences along the way.

Green Spines or links provide a powerful narrative for urban centres to promote health and wellbeing and the power of the natural world to help people thrive. In Basildon a Green Link can pull in the rich surrounding green infrastructure and biodiversity of the borough in an engaging experiential route that can support play and recreation, fitness and sports, public art and landscaping, dwell space and relaxation, social gathering and cultural events. Urban greening routes and networks all over the world from the garden cities of the UK to the High Line in New York, demonstrate the power of green infrastructure to draw people back into dense urban spaces through the principles of biophilia and biodiversity, and creating platforms for social and cultural activities of varying scales and impact.

The GREEN SPINE for Basildon town centre will be strategized as an iterative programme, identifying initial spaces and projects to focus on in the first 3 years, and then orchestrating its roll out over longer-term development opportunities and public realm improvement. Temporary and meanwhile green infrastructure can be dovetailed with more permanent design to provide a rich collection of projects and spaces for community use that develop into a final completed piece through the whole town centre.

To deliver the GREEN SPINE, the local authority would provide strategic leadership, carving out the macro shape, route and objectives of the project. A 'masterplan' design can then be taken to all asset owners and developers who can work collaboratively to support the vision, whilst delivering their own development plots and public realm as connecting nodes along the spine.

The GREEN SPINE champions walkability and connectivity, transforming the town centre into a safe haven of welcoming pedestrian experience for users of all abilities. It foregrounds the principle of green space first, only taking it away to manage vehicular access, and other infrastructure needs. It opens up the conversation for a range of community infrastructure from community gardens, growing spaces, outdoor learning spaces and pocket spaces for biodiversity and research. The whole spine can become an informal playground for all ages and encourage intergenerational and intercultural projects exploring relationships with food, arts and culture.

The GREEN SPINE can also integrate creative-tech. Bio-tech research through planting areas, sites for monitoring air and water quality and biodiversity, recreation and fitness trails linked to apps and digital networks. The GREEN SPINE can become a test bed site for future tech innovation, inviting business, academia and community to work together on next-gen projects and partnerships, attracting public and private sector support.



## 08. DELIVERY GUIDANCE

### Sustainable Culture

#### Public private & statutory sector partnership

A key differentiator for the Culture and Creative Industries Strategy is its focus and engagement on the private sector partnerships and collaboration that can be built across Basildon's creativetech enterprise and business community, alongside the property development companies invested in delivering large sections of the re-visioned town centre. It is vital that the Culture and Creative Industries Strategy sets up effective communication channels with these potential partners.

#### How Will We Measure Impact?

Outcome	Output
An increase in external investment and funding in the borough from sponsors and national and local funders including Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, thus supporting the growth in the social economy and helping strengthen our cultural maturity that will in turn help further ongoing investment and funding in culture and the creative industries	Increased Investment (£)
Reduced vacancy rates in Basildon Town Centre	Town Centre Vacancy Rate
Greater footfall in Basildon Town Centre	Footfall
An increase in cultural and creative industry events in Basildon Town Centre and around the borough, increasing cultural engagement and supporting local businesses financially	Event attendees
A vibrant town centre will help reduce the fear of crime and build local pride	Incidents of crime
We will help showcase and celebrate the diversity of the borough, building social cohesion	Satisfaction with the area



## Theory of Change for the Culture and Creative Industries Strategy

The Problem	Causes and Effects	Solutions	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Traditionally weak engagement with culture and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low levels of social cohesion and belonging.</li> <li>Lack of vibrancy</li> <li>Skills deficits</li> <li>Low levels of historical investment/opportunities</li> <li>Creative brain drain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve resident engagement in the culture and heritage</li> <li>Deliver culture and heritage activities which improve resident's sense of belonging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative Basildon programme</li> <li>Collaborative work with ACE, Creative Estuary and local and national creative organisations</li> <li>Ambassador Group formation and operation</li> <li>BID development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater investment for culture and heritage</li> <li>Attendees at culture and heritage events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater coordination around opportunities and activities</li> <li>Enhanced local creatives sector</li> <li>Town centre economy supported</li> <li>Improved social cohesion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved resident engagement with arts and culture helps improve community cohesion, helps retain our creatives, builds the social economy and secures greater inward investment</li> </ul>
High town centre vacancy rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fear of crime and crime</li> <li>Lack of civic pride</li> <li>Unsustainable local economy</li> <li>Fraying town centre fabric</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meanwhile Use</li> <li>Bring footfall back to encourage return of investment</li> <li>Soft regeneration leading to hard regeneration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in meanwhile use, through grant funding</li> <li>Ambassador Group formation and operation</li> <li>BID development and creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced vacancy rates</li> <li>Increased investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for creatives to showcase and hone their work</li> <li>More cultural opportunities for residents and visitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reduction in the number of vacant units in the town centre</li> </ul>
Low median wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low level of career aspiration</li> <li>Poor quality, volatile work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stimulating higher aspiration</li> <li>Encouraging more people into better paid work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth of CCI's</li> <li>Growth of employment in KIBS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of CCI's</li> <li>Number of people employed in CCI's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth of CCI sector</li> <li>Greater number of future jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased GDP</li> </ul>
Diminishing town centre viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More vacant units</li> <li>Fraying town centre</li> <li>Investment outflow</li> <li>Fear of crime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring people back to the town centre</li> <li>Investment in live / workspace, culture and leisure Infrastructure and public realm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural events programme</li> <li>Bidding for significant town centre regeneration funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Square metrage of town centre developed or renewed</li> <li>Town centre footfall increased</li> <li>More investment secured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More vibrant town centre</li> <li>Improved leisure and culture offer</li> <li>Improved public realm</li> <li>Reduced crime and fear of crime</li> <li>Greater understanding of what works and how this can aid other town centres regen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basildon recovers its position as a regional visitor and shopping destination</li> </ul>
Weak civic pride and identity of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unfair reputation</li> <li>External stigma</li> <li>Lower community wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme activities that improve community cohesion and satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural events programme</li> <li>Ambassador Group formation and operation</li> <li>BID development and creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased pride in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A greater understanding of what works and how this can aid other town centres around the borough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities feel proud to call Basildon home and want to stay, develop their creative practice</li> </ul>
Low levels of social economy operating in the culture sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low levels of investment from external funders and sponsors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of a Culture and Creative Industries Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted external funding to build capacity and skills in the sector</li> <li>UKSPF Social Enterprise Adviser</li> <li>Community Development support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding fayres and targeted advice</li> <li>Training and development</li> <li>Enhanced collaboration opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A more diversified social economy with a greater number of cultural organisations</li> <li>More investment into the borough for creative ventures</li> <li>A greater capacity to act at pace for relevant opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mature and cohesive social economy that is better able to bring investment into the borough and enhance the creative and cultural industries</li> </ul>