

WARNING
SEVERE RISK OF
INSPIRATION

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Our Manifesto for Culture and Creativity in Southampton



A Radical Guide for Change by the
Cultural Connectors
Part of Connecting Culture

WHAT'S NEXT
SOUTHAMPTON ?



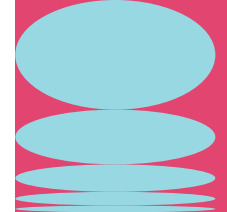
We are the Cultural Connectors

The Connecting Culture project aimed to connect young people to cultural organisations and opportunities in Southampton and use their voices to influence the development of Southampton as a creative city. It began with a Creative Consultation programme and research in schools and other learning/support settings with 600 children and young people.

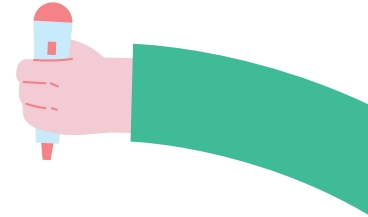
We, the Cultural Connectors - a team of local young people aged 16-25 - had the opportunity to programme an arts festival 'What's Next Southampton?' in June 2023. It was designed to give back to the community. We believe that such experiences should be accessible to all people.



The Cultural Connectors.



This manifesto places young people at the forefront of our vision of the future.



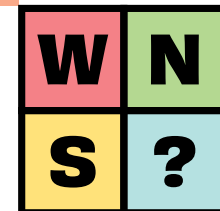
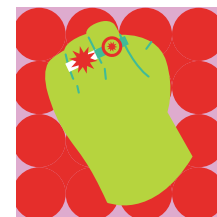
By placing the focus on young people, we wish to mobilise a generation who feel empowered to **use their voices and be agents for change**. We want to encourage young people to **want more for and from Southampton** and to shape the city they will inherit.

We hope that this declaration of our intentions resonates with all young people across the City and encourages them to **take pride in Southampton**.

We all want a legacy from this and we believe that, regardless of age, **we should all feel seen**. Young people's **creativity deserves to be celebrated**.



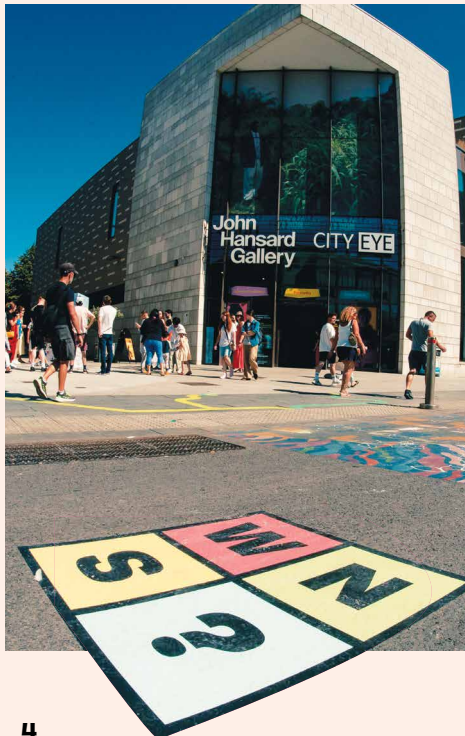
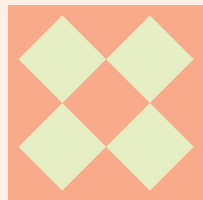
Art Asia.



Our Manifesto for Culture and Creativity in Southampton

A Radical Guide for Change

01



Our Home

We want Southampton spaces to make us feel safe, included and respected.

We like Southampton's cultural buildings, green spaces and places to hang out, but we don't always feel welcome. We want to feel like we belong, no matter our age, background or beliefs.

Left: Southampton's Cultural Quarter.



02

Our Places

We want Southampton to look more vibrant, reflecting the people who live here!

We want more colour and pattern across the city, drawing our eyes up and igniting our imaginations. We want to see our communities and artists on display across our streets.



Stories of Southampton collaborative mural.



Your Brain Explained, Theatre for Life.

03

Our Voices

We want a place in Southampton's community to allow our individual and collective voice to be heard.

We want to be the change makers for our city. To do this we need our voices to be heard and acted on. We need city leaders to bring us into the conversation.



Drop-In Skate School.

04

Our Passions

We want a creative scene that feels culturally relevant to us, our passions, interests and beliefs.

We are proud of Southampton's cultural world, from our music scene to our football club. We want our interests to be considered important and relevant, including gaming and online spaces.

05

Our Access

We want access to resources and funds that allow us to follow our dreams, without having to compete against each other to get there.

We want easy ways to get the things we need to follow our passions, without having to write big difficult applications or know the 'right people'.



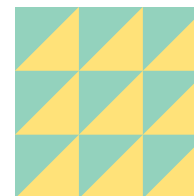
Left and Above:
Southampton Fashion Show.



Our Connections

We want an easy way to find out about what's going on around Southampton, and the ability to get to activity independently.

Often, we only find out about activities because our school told us about them, so we want a way of exploring all our options ourselves. We want better transport to help us be more independent and feel safe travelling around our city.



What's next, Southampton?

We, the Cultural Connectors, pledge to:



1 Make sure our voices are heard, and be a voice for other young people

2 Put inclusivity and accessibility at the heart of our decisions

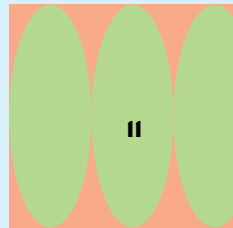
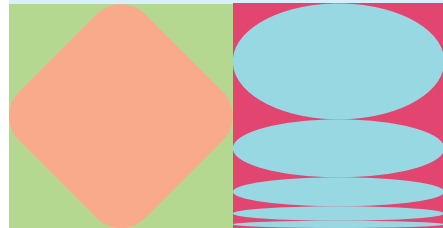
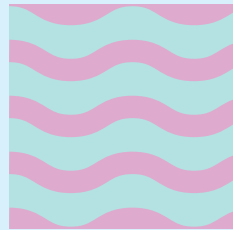
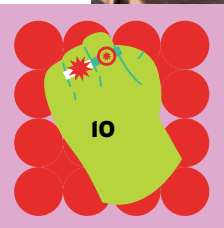
3 Be passionate advocates for the vibrant arts and cultural landscape in our city

Above: Colourful Walkway childrens artwork competition by John Hansard Gallery and Southampton City Council. Below: African Activities.



How will you enable children and young people across Southampton?

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About the Connecting Culture project



Connecting Culture (2019-2024) was a ground-breaking project, led by University of Southampton (Arts & Culture) with a large consortium of cultural organisations and child-focused services.

The project explored how **Southampton's thriving Cultural Quarter can enrich the lives of children and young people as a future creative hub.** It centred the voices and opinions of Southampton's children and young people to ensure they are heard and acted upon to influence the city's cultural development.

Creative Consultation workshops were delivered by local artists Nazneen Ahmed, Faye Philips and Natalie Watson. Around 600 children from 16 schools and youth-settings took part. Their voices formed a picture of how children and young people would like to experience **creative activity across Southampton in the future.**

A live digital tool, **Culture Mapper**, was developed to record the range of cultural and creative activities engaging children and young people in Southampton. Over time the aim is to provide data on the range of creative engagements, and where they have been located. It will support the cultural sector to work together to understand networks and existing connections, share ideas or best practice, and give peer support and learning.

The Cultural Connectors drew on the ideas and dreams of the City's children to inform this **Radical Guide for Change.** It is informed by their research, data from the Creative Consultation programme and their own experiences of arts and culture in Southampton. The hope is that the manifesto will be adopted by the people and leaders of the city and will help spark a **cultural and creative environment that reflects the needs of children and young people across Southampton.**



The power of young people

|| We recruited our six young **Cultural Connectors** in 2022 to empower youth voice within the city's cultural sector. They embarked on a dynamic research traineeship and cultural leadership programme with us.

As young researchers, they got to the heart of what children and young people want in Southampton. Their research, vision and aspirations for the city led to the incredible What's Next Southampton? festival. The free arts, fashion and music festival united local arts organisations and filled Guildhall Square and Cultural Quarter venues with inclusive activities for children, young people and families. We couldn't be happier with the result of placing our trust in young people, and urge other organisations to do the same. ||

Louise Coysh, Associate Director,
Arts & Culture, University of Southampton



Cultural Connectors and project team.



African Activities.

Shaping a bright future

Originally conceived in 2017, Connecting Culture has grown and evolved to compliment and contribute to Southampton's vibrant cultural scene and strategic priorities - past, present and future - including:

- ▶ **Arts Council England's Quality Principles for Children and Young People**
- ✱ **Southampton's Cultural Strategy 2021-2031**
- ◆ **Southampton Cultural Education Partnership (2017-)**
- ▲ **Southampton Cultural Data Observatory (2024)**
- **Southampton City Council's Children and Young People's Strategy 2022-2027**
- **Southampton UK City of Culture 2025 Bid**
- ▶ **Southampton Child Friendly City (2022-23)**
- **Young Southampton**





MAST Mayflower Studios.

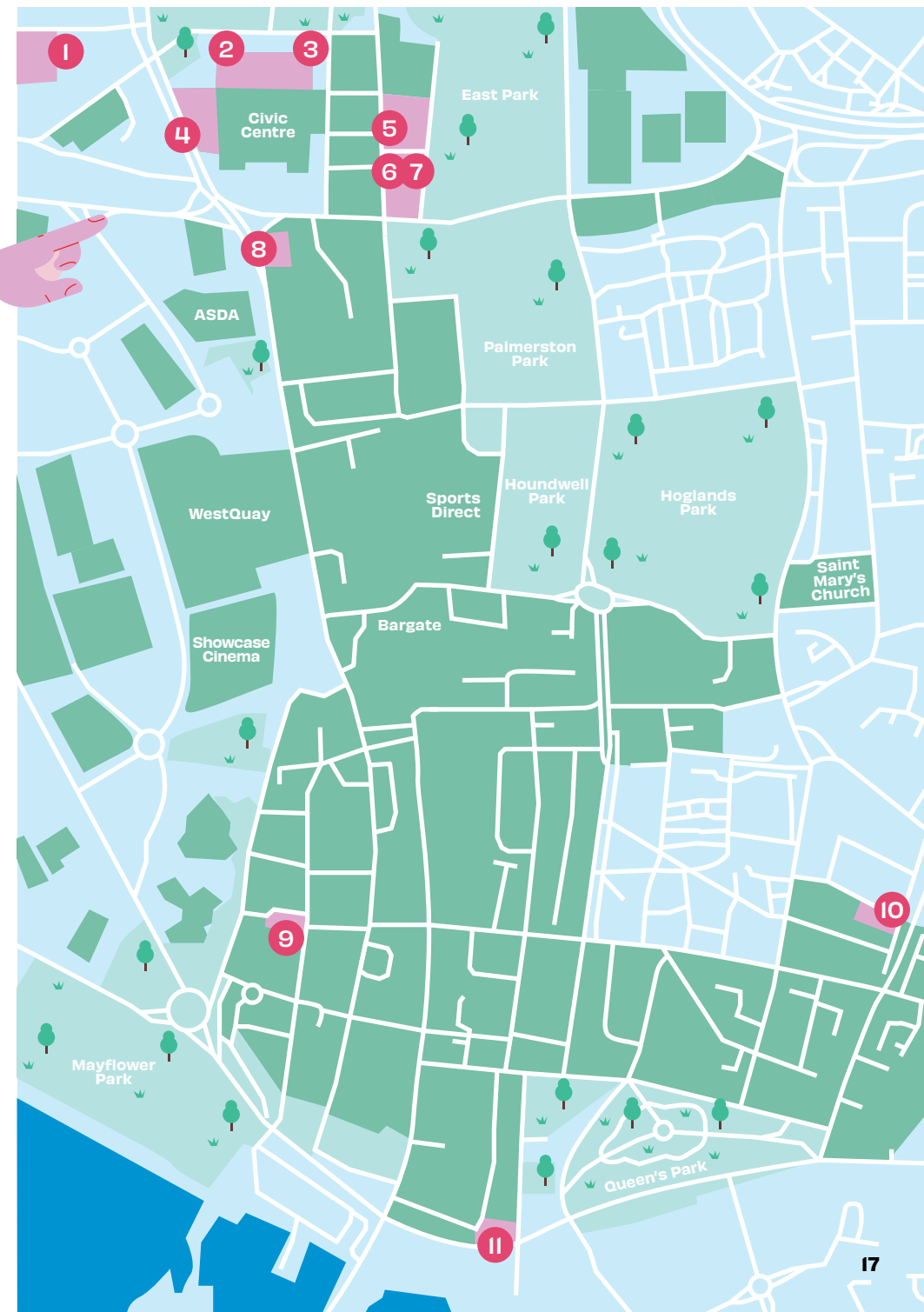
Explore your cultural and creative city

This map highlights some of Southampton's creative places available to young people, in the Cultural Quarter and beyond.

Whilst it's not fully comprehensive, it offers a starting point to explore your Cultural and Creative City.

Key

- | | | | |
|---|--|----|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Mayflower Theatre | 6 | John Hansard Gallery |
| 2 | Southampton City Art Gallery | 7 | City Eye |
| 3 | Southampton Central Library | 8 | In Focus |
| 4 | SeaCity Museum | 9 | Tudor House Museum |
| 5 | MAST Mayflower Studios
includes Artfulscribe; Artwork;
Our Version Media; ZoieLogic
Dance Theatre | 10 | SoCo Music
Project/Planet Sounds |
| | | 11 | God's House Tower |



Acknowledgements

The Connecting Culture Project was led by University of Southampton (Arts and Culture) with a large consortium of cultural organisations and child-focused services.

Thanks to the Cultural Connectors, Creative Consultation Artists, Project Team and our community of collaborators, partners, participants and supporters for their contributions.

African Activities	Skate Southampton
Art Asia	SoCo Music Project
ArtfulScribe	Solent University
a space arts	Southampton and Isle of Wight Music Hub
Artswork	Southampton Central Library
Awaaz FM	Southampton City Art Gallery
Black History Month South	Southampton City Council (Culture & Tourism; Childrens Services; Music Services; Stronger Communities and Youth Forum)
DropIn Skate School	Southampton Cooperative Learning Trust
Child Friendly Southampton	Southampton Cultural Education Partnership
City Eye	Southampton Education Forum
Creative Youth Network	Strive EP
Diverse City	Theatre for Life
God's House Tower	Tudor House Museum
John Hansard Gallery	Turner Sims
Khaos Club	Unity IOI FM
MAST Mayflower Studios	University of Southampton (Arts & Culture Department; Faculty of Arts & Humanities; Public Engagement with Research Unit, Social Impact Lab, University of Sanctuary)
Mayflower Theatre	ZoieLogic Dance Theatre
Mini Maestros	
No Limits	
Re:So The Retail Solent Initiative	
Riot Club	
SeaCity Museum	



Schools and youth settings

Bassett Green Primary School
Bitterne Park Primary School
Bitterne Park School
The Cedar School
Mount Pleasant Junior School
No Limits
Oasis Academy Lord's Hill
The Polygon School
Redbridge Community College
Redbridge Primary School
Shirley Junior School
Shirley Warren Nursery and Primary School
Sholing Junior
Sinclair Primary and Nursery School
Southampton City College
Upper Shirley High School
Youth Options

connecting
culture

Special thanks to our supporters



connectingculture-southampton.org.uk

southampton.culturemapper.org.uk

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**"Young people's
creativity
deserves to be
celebrated."**

Cultural Connectors

