

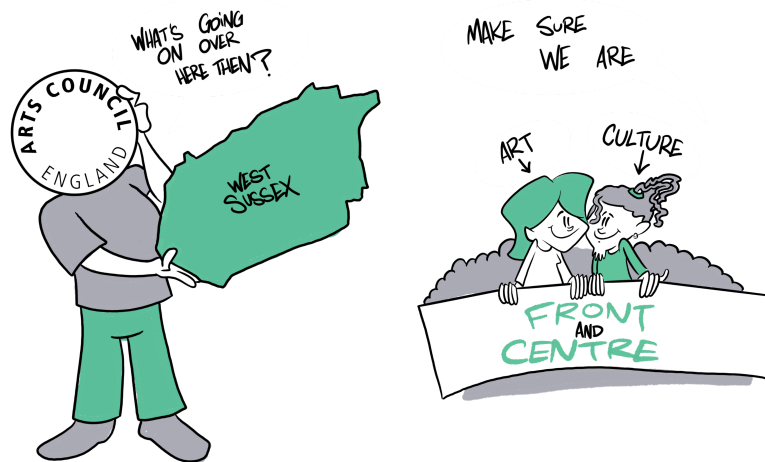
West Sussex Creatives meeting 23rd Sept 2026 10 - 12 noon, Creative Crawley Unit 79/80 County Mall

Welcome by Louise Blackwell, Creative Director, Creative Crawley (LB) and Liz McCarthy-Neild (LMcN), Chichester Festival Theatre

7th meeting of West Sussex Creatives

Updates

Arts Council England - approached Creative Crawley to apply for some managed funds to support the admin function of West Sussex Creatives from Sept 26 - March 2027 acknowledging West Sussex is not as well supported as Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council in terms of culture (e.g no culture lead in the council)



Culture Sussex - slide show from LMcN and LB about work that has been happening across East & West Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Culture Sussex brings together cultural and local authority partners across East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and West Sussex to develop a shared vision for culture in the region. There are 7 cultural leaders who lead the work and make the decisions and council officers that act as critical friends. University of Sussex administers it until the end of Dec 2026. We are hoping to launch a website, film and databank by end of October 2026.

Culture Sussex & SBSA Collaboration

- Culture Sussex has been actively engaging in the devolution process with the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA) - to help shape the culture section of the emerging Prosperity Strategy and understanding where culture can deliver against SBSA priorities
- The Culture Sussex team has drawn on existing cultural strategies, evidence and policy documents from across Sussex (including *From West Sussex to the World*), together with the emerging Databank, to inform this work

- Initial ideas and themes have been positively received by SBSA colleagues
- Culture Sussex is helping to ensure that culture is recognised as a contributor to growth, skills, wellbeing, place-making and prosperity across Sussex
- There are five emerging cross-cutting themes identified to date and gather feedback before the Culture Chapter is further developed:

Emerging Culture Chapter Themes

- **OPEN** – *Skills & Opportunity*
Culture opens doors
- **BELONG** – *Place & Belonging*
Culture makes places feel like home
- **THRIVE** – *Health & Wellbeing*
Culture helps us live well
- **MAKE** – *Clusters of Creative Production*
Culture is people making
- **STAY** – *Culture, Heritage & Tourism*
Culture gives people a reason to visit, stay and return

Consultation & Engagement

- The full draft Prosperity Strategy is expected to be published for consultation later in the year
- Culture Sussex has offered to support the development of engagement and consultation activity relating to the culture section
- Further opportunities for organisations, practitioners and communities to contribute will follow as the broader consultation process develops
- At this stage, the themes above should be viewed as emerging areas of focus rather than final priorities

Advocacy and resources

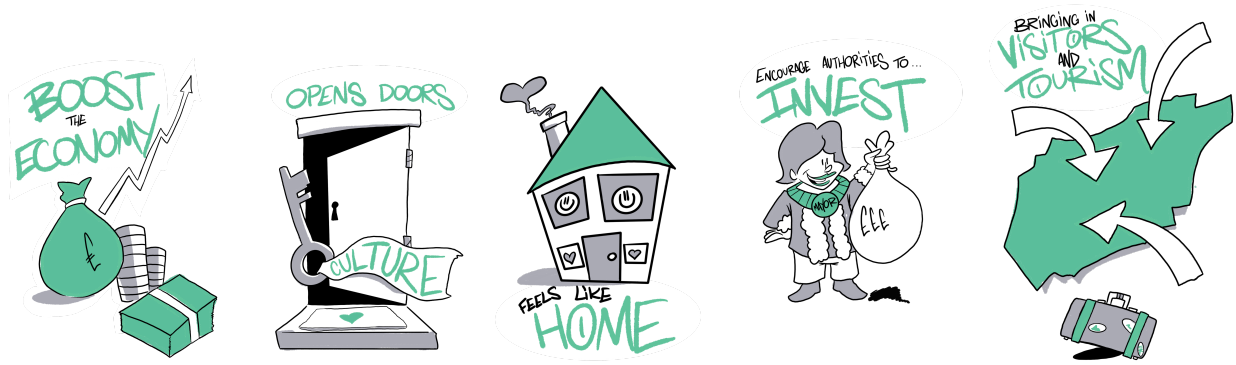
Alongside the Prosperity Strategy work, Culture Sussex is developing a suite of advocacy resources:

- A Sussex-wide Databank, demonstrating how culture contributes to the nine SBSA competencies.
- A new Culture Sussex website, bringing together evidence, resources and updates.
- A film, highlighting the role culture plays across Sussex.
- Shared advocacy resources including an Elevator Pitch and FAQs.

These resources are intended to support cultural organisations, local authorities, politicians, mayoral candidates and others to make the case for culture.

Future of Culture Sussex

- Culture Sussex is currently convened through to December 2026
- Work is underway to plan its future beyond the current programme period
- In the meantime, the group continues to focus on supporting the Prosperity Strategy process and ensuring culture has a strong voice within the emerging Strategic Authority



West Sussex Creatives updates

A range of people spoke passionately about their work and shared updates with the group. These are the people that attended:

Unfortunately the member of the Creative Crawley team who took detailed minutes has been off sick since the meeting. We will update the minutes when they are back.

Here's a list of who attended:

Rosemary Allen, Crawley
 Hannah Carter, Haywards Heath
 Ben Cavanagh, Littlehampton
 Chris Cook, CCYS Crawley
 Rachael Dines, Worthing
 Andrew Elston, Crawley
 Ashleigh-Ann French, Lark Park Theatre Company, Crawley
 Sophie Hobson , Chichester
 James Leggott , Crawley
 Liz McCarthy-Nield , Chichester
 Tanya Peters and Kevin Quilty, Worthing Theatres and Museum
 Emily Robson, Pallant House Gallery, Chichester
 Karl Singaporewala, Crawley
 Dean Spears, Sussex Bay
 James Underwood, West Sussex Music
 Daniel White, Watford
 Beth Williams , Crawley
 Rosalind Turner
 Simon Edwards, Crawley
 Ndinawe Chamunda, Crawley
 Irma Stuart-Tei, Diverse Crawley
 Danile Li, Sionist Books, Horsham
 Andrew Sheperd & Eleanor Manners, Theatre Centre, Crawley
 Lonny Chauhan, Crawley
 Kayla Lucking-Booth, Dance Hub, Crawley
 Clair
 Louise Blackwell, Rosie Gilbertson , Esme Davis , Creative Crawley

Any other business

The next meeting will be online on **Thurs 15th October from 4pm - 6pm.**

Please sign up [HERE](#) for the link.

Please remember we have an access budget to use to help people to attend these meetings. Email louise@creativecrawley.com for more information.

There is an in person meeting of the Crawley Creatives on **Weds 21 October from 10am - 1pm at Creative Crawley's space Unit 79/80, County Mall** which is a very informal event led by one of Creative Crawley's resident artists; Sarah Maple. You can come and meet Crawley creative professionals and use Unit 79/80 as your work base for the morning. You can sign up [HERE](#)

Finally, we are looking for venues to host the November 2026 and March 2027 meet ups - could you offer some space for a meeting in your area? Drop is a line if so.

Please do share the information with others who may be interested. We are only as strong as the people involved and we want to spread the word far and wide.

If there is a particular subject or theme you'd like us to explore in coming meetings, please let us know.

Thanks for being part of it.