

Appendix A



Culture in our High Street

A project to bring Yeovil centre town alive.

Like many towns up and down the country, Yeovil has a number of empty shops and buildings, giving an overall impression that the local economy is less than thriving. In the short term this is unlikely to change. It is recognised that out of town retail parks and internet buying have contributed to a shift in the convention of town centre shopping. This was highlighted in the Mary Portas Review, commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government, and published earlier this year. According to the report, 'Our high street is **So much more than shopping**' and we should be '**Reimagining urban spaces to help revitalise the town centre**'.

Cultural activities of all kinds have a positive impact on the local area and its economy; local sports, arts and heritage add to the vitality of a town, engage with the local community and encourage a sense of place. For visitors and people looking to relocate to an area, the cultural offer will often influence decisions to visit or stay. In a town centre context, cultural activities offer wider experience to visitors, help to create a destination for communities and contribute the economic, cultural and social benefit for all. This does not mean to change the commercial focus of our high street, but to improve it and to stimulate a waning interest in the heart of our towns.

The Portas' Review has helped to identify what Government, Local Authorities, businesses and communities can do together to "**promote & develop prosperous and diverse High Streets**" and to "**catalyse innovative local approaches to managing and revitalising high streets**". It lays down a challenge for local partners to re-imagine their town centres and high streets, '**ensuring they offer something new and different that neither out-of-town shopping centres nor the internet can match - an experience that goes beyond retail...**' However, this challenge can not be met without support from communities, imagination from businesses (including arts and cultural sectors), willingness from the local partners and the resources to deliver. The recent success of *Super Saturday* on the 22nd September, where the *Gardeners' Fair*, *The Farmers' Market*, *Buskfest*, *Somerset Art Weeks* and many other individuals and groups joined forces to provide enjoyment for all through a range of **high quality** cultural and art activities, proved that cultural events bring the town to life and create a real buzz. We believe the success can be grown by creating a year round programme of activities in the town centre, developing long-term partnerships and bringing different communities together.

This proposal outlines a 12 months art and history project that will contribute to the town's vitality. It will effectively provide a positive impact to our high street, in the short term, by engaging local people and visitors and lay-down a long-term foundation for this kind of activity to take place. It directly responds to the Mary Portas' recommendation and supports the ambition of the Town Team to make Yeovil an interesting and attractive place.

The project aims to:

- Connect businesses, local communities and visitors to the town centre through a range of arts and educational activities
- Reinvigorate the town centre and celebrate the history of Yeovil
- Encourage people of all ages to interact socially in the town
- Increase the sense of ownership and local pride with our residents, encouraging more frequent visits, extending the duration of stay in the town and generally fostering a more positive image locally
- Attract more visitors from outside Yeovil, create a unique offer and experience; reinstating the character of the town
- Enhance the visitor experience and offer 'extra' to those visiting the town centre for specific purpose
- Benefit the businesses by bringing in visitors and audiences from diverse backgrounds
- Develop personal connections between businesses and visitors
- Attract families and children, local residents as well visitors from further afield.
- Building a community and relationships between artists, creative practitioners, the public and businesses.

About the Project

Yeovil, a market town built on industry and commerce, has an individuality that lies just below the surface and an unsung history and local heritage that deserves greater profile and celebration. Although we do not have a museum that preserves this history, we can create one that is attractive, relevant and unique, a museum that brings our past to the heart of the public space in Yeovil.

The idea of the project is to invite local residents, communities, colleges and schools to work with creative facilitators and project producers to explore their history and personal heritage in connection with Yeovil. Over a period of 12 months, 4 creative facilitators will be recruited to work with identified community groups, businesses, local communities or individuals to create their version of Museum in an empty shop space located in the town centre. The project will be jointly managed by SSDC Arts Development Service and Somerset Art Works; a team will be created to support the creative facilitators to work with a wide range of partners to realise their version of "museum". Displays, creative interpretations and the delivery of a programme of educational and participatory activities, such as workshops, events and performance will take place across different locations in the town centre. All the activities will be good quality, focus on interaction and will aim to maximize public engagement in the town. The key aim of the project is to use spaces within the town centre to celebrate local people and local heritage.

Alongside in creating a museum in a physical space, the project will include the development of an on-line portal, functioning as audio-video archive, that documents personal histories that connect with Yeovil. It will also function as the main documentation of the project, widening the interpretation and links associated with them. The website will be an effective way of allowing the project to be reached by those living far away from Yeovil, and of promoting the project further afield. The on-line portal will be developed by a digital artist or a group with the following experience:

- developing and managing a website
- working with community groups and individuals

The project will create an opportunity for an effective marketing and promotional campaign for businesses and traders, supporting a long-term vision of developing the wider offer of the town. In addition, the increase in arts and cultural activities will enhance the overall experience for people coming to the town for different purposes.

The project alone does not provide all the answer for improving our high-street economy, however, it aims to give an experience to those who engage with it. By cross-promotion and marketing it will compliment and integrate with other town centre improvement ideas, such as the commercial incentives, festivals and marketing initiatives that are aspirations of the Town Team.

The project will include a strong element of consultation, the public will have the opportunity to feed into the process through taking part, either actively working as volunteers, contributing their personal heritage or viewing. We will collect feedback and produce an evaluation which will inform any future development.

Vision and long-term sustainability

Culture in our High Street responds to the immediate aim of re-inventing our high-street and also carries a wider aspiration to improve local perception of the town. By delivering this project successfully, Yeovil will,

- attract significant investment from funders, such as Arts Council England and others that support arts and cultural activities
- attract more businesses and strengthen its local economy
- strengthen partnerships between local business, art organisations, groups and individuals.
- increase its cultural offer and test the appetite for arts and cultural activities and facilities
- be a destination for cultural tourism
- be a better place to live, work and visit

Project Team:

The project team consists of the following:

Steering Group

- up to 6 individuals, including representatives from the partners, who will be invited to join and offer their professional advice and expertise.
- responsible for guidance, direction and support to the rest of the project team.

Project Manager

- SSDC Arts Development Officer
- oversees the delivery of the project
- coordinate the communication among those involved from SSDC

Project Producer / Curatorial Support

- Curatorial Services, Somerset Art Works
- Liaise with Creative Facilitators, individuals, groups, local partners to develop project ideas
- Coordinate the delivery of the project, marketing, publicity, documentation and evaluation
- Report to Project Manager
- Line management responsibility of Project Assistant
- Produce brief, manage recruitments
- Produce contracts, risk assessment, and other relevant documents
- Create overall branding and artistic direction of the project

Project Assistant

- Support the delivery and administration of the project
- Develop and manage volunteers
- Support the Project Producer to coordinate venue installation, equipment, events, marketing and publicity

Indicative Timetable

Oct 12 - confirm partnerships and in-kind support
 Nov 12 - develop funding application to Arts Council
 Jan 13 - funding confirm, recruitment
 April 13- 1st project delivery
 July 13- 2nd project delivery
 Sept 13 - 3rd project delivery (in conjunction of Somerset Art Weeks)
 Dec 13 - 4th project delivery
 Jan 14 - final evaluation and closing event

Budget and Finance

The total project cost £34,020 (£101,700 including in-kind)
 In-kind support total £67,680, including Business Rates, venue, project management and steering groups
 Seeking £28,520 from Arts Council England, conversation has already taken place.
 Details see the attached Budget.

Budget

| EXPENDITURE | | | | | Note |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|---------|------------|-----------------|------|
| Creative Facilitator/ Artist | £175/day | 10 days | 4 projects | £7,000 | a. |
| Project Assistant | £90/day | 40 days | | £3,600 | |
| Project Producer/Curatorial support | £200/day | 25 days | | £5,000 | b. |
| Project team Expenses | £500 | | | £500 | |
| Volunteer Expenses | £200 | | 4 projects | £800 | |
| Materials & expenses (artists) | £1,000 | | 4 projects | £4,000 | c. |
| Website Development/Online portal | | | | £5,000 | |
| Marketing materials, design and printing | £200 | | 4 projects | £800 | d. |
| Press and marketing support | £500 | | 4 projects | £2,000 | e. |
| Steering Group Expenses | £200 | | | £200 | f. |
| Evaluation | £2,000 | | | £2,000 | |
| Documentation/photo and video | £1,500 | | | £1,500 | g. |
| recruitment, promotion and branding | £500 | | | | |
| Contingency | | | | £1,620 | h. |
| TOTAL | | | | £34,020 | |
| IN-KIND | | | | | |
| Business Rate | | | | £18,000 | i. |
| Shop rental | | | | £40,000 | j. |
| Project Management | | | | £1,680 | k. |
| Steering Group | | | | £6,000 | l. |
| office space for Project Assistant | | | | £2,000 | m. |
| TOTAL | | | | £67,680 | |
| INCOME | | | | | |
| SSDC | | | | £5,000 | |
| ACE | | | | £28,520 | |
| Sponsorship and donation | | | | £500 | |
| TOTAL | | | | £34,020 | |
| Total project cost (including in-kind) | | | | £101,700 | |

Notes:

- a. Develop theme, research and working with communities to create display and exhibition.
- b. Liaise with creative facilitators, groups, individual to develop the project idea, presentation and delivery of each projects.
- c. Cost of installation materials, tools, signage, opening reception, public events, workshops, and making good after each of the event.
- d. Local business or graduates
- e. Write press release, handle press contacts, carryout PR work to make sure project reach local and national level
- f. Meeting traveling expenses
- g. A final DVD and photo documentation about the project
- h. 5% of project cost (total £32,400)
- i. Estimate. Discretionary rate to be sought from SSDC
- j. Estimate. In-kind £0 rental for meanwhile use of empty shop
- k. SSDC Arts Officer, £25,000 pro rata x 12 days
- l. Individual contribute time and specialism, 4 days x 6 members x £250/day
- m. Desk space at Octagon Theatre, £50/day x 40days